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ABSTRACT

The theme of this issue is media services in open education schools. Several articles discuss media services, media specialists, open schools, teachers, school children, and all their interrelationships. The challenges and problems of open school media services are considered. In the section on environmental considerations the views of architects and media specialists are presented. (WH)

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Media Services in Open – Education Schools

Raymond W. Barber
Issue Editor

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The Open School Media Services: Threat or Challenge?

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Raymond W. Barber

Definitions

Like it or not, open schools will be in most of our futures. The Educational Facilities Laboratories estimate that more than one-half of the schools constructed in the United States during the past three years were built with a view toward some type of inter-classroom interaction.[1] Teachers in traditional school buildings are also experimenting with open school methods of pupil management and curriculum design. It is primarily a way of looking at children and looking at knowledge.

Mrs. Judith Meyers, in her article that follows, points out that there is a confusing array of definitions of open education. This confusion results from the fact that open education is both the expression of an architectural concept, and a concept of child development and learning theory.

The best definition I have come upon to date, which includes both environmental and pedagogical considerations, is one given by Ronald S. Barth.

> What is open education? Open education is a way of thinking about knowledge. It is characterized by openness: doors ajar, and children come and go; classrooms are open, and children bring objects of interest in and objects of interest out; space is fluid, not preempted by desks and chairs organized in rows or in any permanent way; a variety of spaces filled with a variety of materials; children move openly from place to place, from activity to activity. Time is open, to permit and release rather than constrain or prescribe. The curriculum is open to choices by adults and children as a function of the interests of children. The curriculum is the dependent variable, dependent on the child rather than the independent variable upon which the child must depend. . .

Dr. Barber is an assistant professor in the Graduate School of Library Science, Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pa.

> Perhaps most importantly, open education is characterized by openness of self on the part of children and adults. Persons are openly sensitive to and supportive of other persons, not closed off by anxiety and threat. Feelings are exposed and respected. Teachers are open to the possibilities inherent in children; children are open to the possibilities inherent in other children, in materials, and in themselves. In short, open education implies an environment in which the possibilities for exploration and learning of self and of the world are unobstructed.[2]

Development of Open Media Services

The open school concept draws from many sources in formulating its basic philosophy.[3]

1 Experiences of teachers with interage grouping in British primary schools broke the isolation and lockstep which age grouping had encouraged.

2 Team teaching experiments indicated to teachers that they did not have to be all things to all children, but by cooperating, could build on the strengths of each other. When they were no longer isolated, individual teachers found that they could share, trust and grow.

3 New techniques of construction and principles of architecture made large open spaces possible.

4 Learning theorists in sequencing skills to be mastered by students presented teachers with a technology of individual progress by developing programmed and individualized learning materials and feedback-self-testing measures.

5 The curriculum projects of the 1950's and 1960's added an emphasis on discovery and inquiry.

6 Piaget's work indicated that children move from the concrete to the abstract in learning.

7 Student activists demanded a relevant, humanistic education.

8 Alternative forms of education based on the British primary model, Summerhill, Parkway and storefront schools indicated to many that children could handle more freedom and choice

than had been previously thought.

The papers in this publication indicate their debt to these varied sources and show the concern with both the learner-centered aspects and environmental aspects of open education.

Stages in the development of the open school

There are few schools which will enter into open education full bloom. Even in new schools built with few if any walls, teachers will often create barriers and grow slowly into openness. Stages moving toward openness are outlined in the chart on page 4.

The reluctance of media specialists to move immediately into the stage three media program, outlined below, is both natural and desired. Development in the British schools has been characterized by slow, deliberate, well thought out steps.[4] But progress we must, for the next challanges will be fast upon us and all too often we have reacted to educational innovation, redefining our role after the initiation of the innovation rather than seeing implications, and planning our contribution to the innovation.

Materials Requirements

Materials play a central role in the open school. Here materials initiate and sustain interest, and promote exploration and learning.[5] They provide the concrete vehicle through which the child internalizes concepts and abstractions. The teacher cannot directly provide the exploratory experiences which lead to learning but they can provide the support, the environment, and the materials which will involve him in the learning process. [6] The media specialist with his expertise in materials selection and utilization is a key person.

But in the end the success of the media program, although influenced by the abundance and accessibility of materials, will rest on the teacher.[7] This places a new emphasis on the ability of the media specialist to both work with teachers to enable them to use materials with children and to work directly with children.

Competencies of The Media Specialist

The media specialist in the open school needs, in addition to the

	The School	Teachers	Media Center	The Media Specialist
1	movable walls between classrooms	possible cooperation between teachers	located in one room	may be called in for cooperative planning
2	pods and clusters	cooperative teaching, teachers become specialists, some team teaching but mostly teachers take turns teaching	resource centers, open schedules	becomes part of planning teams
3	few if any walls; communities and sub-schools established	team teaching, all teachers cooperating to develop an integrated, individualized program	the materials center is seen as part of the teaching space	an integral part of team planning for individualized instruction

standard competencies in media service design, the following compentencies.

1 Ability to give and take in open quarters and team situations.

2 Skill in writing behavioral objectives and preparing mini-learning units (learning centers).

3 Ability to make independent decisions which may be defended on the basis of learning needs and priorities, not manuals, rules, and guides.

4 Ability to assign priorities and realize that all objectives cannot be reached at one time, that some things are more important than others, and that time, energy, and resources should be channeled to these.

5 Skill to think in terms of alternatives.

6 Expertise in learning theory and psychology to enable him to treat each child as an individual and interact with him to assure him a positive learning experience.

This issue of the *Drexel Library Quarterly* has been prepared to assist media specialists, in almost any type of school library, to progress toward a more open style in their relations with materials, students, faculty members and the community.

Mrs. Meyers in her article examines the whole concept of openness and its relation to materials, their evaluation, organization and classification, curriculum design, and school administration. She indicates the new ways materials may have to be handled and the new uses which students will make of them in the open classroom.

Dr. Pillon reports a study conducted by her in schools located around Terre Haute, Indiana concerning teacher utilization of media services in open schools. She reports the answers to such questions as, "How has the media specialist assisted you in your teaching?" "What has been the impact of the open media center on the children in your school?" "How does the media specialist operate in the open school?"

Students are the key factor in the open school. Mark Weber and Michael Boylan are both practicing school librarians with extensive experience in programming with students. Mr. Weber, using the British primary school as a model, points out the programs which an elementary media specialist might use to facilitate learning. Most of Mr. Boylan's experience has been with secondary school students. In his article he suggests guidelines which the media specialist might follow in encouraging student media projects. The list of projects on which he has consulted is a good example of the untapped creativity available in students.

The articles on the planning of the open school media facility run from the theoretical to the practical. Winslow Wedin, a practicing architect, has designed open-space schools. His article gives some advanced glimpses of what may be around the corner. Tom Hart draws on his experience with Florida and Indiana school buildings to provide a concise practical guide for designing the open school media center.

The Challenge

In preparing this issue the editor talked with many media specialists to explore their concerns about open education. One media supervisor replied that she was frightened of the concept. Yes, it is frightening for it demands that we act in a totally different way. In some instances media specialists no longer have separate media centers and are even without collections located in a specific area. All they are left with are users, space and a dispersed collection. The challenge is to do what we have always said we could do best—provide services to facilitate learning.

This challenge is not for just those in new open buildings but is for all. The open program, although easier in such buildings, is after all a way of looking at people, materials, and information and can be put into practice in every classroom and media center. It is hoped that these papers will help media specialists avoid "future shock" and become more receptive to the many possibilities available in open education.

Acknowledgements

The editor wishes to express his special thanks to Dr. Rosemary

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Notes

1 Carole Martin, "A Kid's Eye View of His Open Classroom," *The Sunday Bulletin* (Philadelphia), 1 April 1973, Section 4, pp. 1, 12.

2 Ronald S. Barth, *Open Education and the American School* (New York: Agathon Press, 1972), pp. 55-56.

3 Alexandre Frazier, *Open Schools for Children* (Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1972), pp. 2-8.

4 Sir Alec Clegg, *Revolution in the British Primary Schools* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1971).

5 Barth, p. 28.

6 Ibid., p. 76.

7 Vivien C. Richman, "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Open Education and Never Knew Whom to Ask," *Grade Teacher*, April 1972, p. 72.

Media Services in the Open School: An Overview

Judith K. Meyers

In considering the topic of media services in the open school, it seems important to explore the concept of openness at the very start. The literature provides a bewildering variety of definitions. Each reading brings out a different shade of meaning. Yet, when one reflects upon all that has been written, then remembers the unfailing enthusiasm with which various practitioners of openness speak, and finally recalls the happy and relaxed children caught up in learning through the open process, it becomes apparent that the kind of openness most essential to education, schools, media centers, classrooms, and learning is not an architectural openness, nor a structural openness, but rather an intellectual and emotional openness.

This openness permits the free sharing of resources and self with all in the school community. It requires flexibility in working with many kinds of people and multiple sets of equipment and materials in an astonishing array of ways. At its foundation is confidence in one's knowledge, skills, and abilities; respect and trust in one's colleagues; and complete dedication to the principle that each child shall have the opportunity to learn in keeping with his own special needs, at his own pace, and in his own way.

What we are saying is that it is the resourcefulness of the media specialist that is the most essential ingredient in media service programs for open schools. Several writers have developed rather complicated and elaborate rationales for what this person does and what he should be called. It seems unnecessary to echo their thoughts here. Note well, however, that it is the action words, the verbs, rather than the nouns, that are most intriguing. Elenora Portteus, Cleveland's (Ohio) Directing

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Judith K. Meyers is coordinator of Media Services, K through 8, in the Lakewood Public Schools, Lakewood, Ohio, and a doctoral candidate at Indiana University.

Supervisor of School Libraries, put it something like this recently in a bulletin to her staff:

> The media specialist should expand, like, utilize, learn, face, back up, appeal, conflict, practice, listen, hear, speak, decide, participate, cooperate, communicate, function, interest, commit, join, give, see, suggest, pledge, recommend, plan, organize, grow, struggle, create, inspire, think, live, direct, visit, know, teach, administer, disagree, unite, hope, want, manage, devise, expect, believe, dream, report, confront, review, present, guide, command, use, value, facilitate, interface, structure, strive, encourage, evaluate, build, counsel, account, schedule, be, face, design, vary, make, tolerate, contribute, risk, assist, weld, welcome, study, experience . . . . .

Functions of the Media Specialist

. . . as medium

It is difficult to discuss the media specialist's function in the open school without taking the opportunity to point out three rather fascinating plays on the word "media" in relation to this function. Certainly one of the most important aspects of the media specialist's work is that of *medium* in an anticipatory and divining sense. It is his power to predict what his clients will need far enough into the future so that the materials and equipment have been acquired and processed into the collection ready for use when called for.

. . . as medium of communication

Unlike many of his fellow librarians, the educational media specialist does not hesitate to function as a *medium of communication* when the situation warrants. In this sense, he is a part of the formal educational organization of people and resources by which society transmits its values and knowledge from one generation to the next. Not content with a role as sentinel at the storehouse of information, he is also an instrument for communicating information. In most states he is by law a teacher. In some school districts teaching experience is a prerequisite for the position of media specialist. More and more frequently the media specialist has had formal training and experience in audiovisual media and methods as well. It is understandable then that he does not blanch at his role as a presenter of information or as a consultant to colleagues and students on their information presentation and communications problems.

. . . as mediator

This last thought provides a logical transition to the third play on the word "media." The media specialist is a *mediator* between man and his graphic records in both a managerial and manipulative sense and an interpretive sense. He is comfortable in taking information originally presented in one format, restructuring it, and re-presenting it in another format, as teachers and students may require. He understands what it is to facilitate learning by restructuring the learning environment. Regarding the various graphic records in the media collection as possible events in the learning environment, he selects all or parts of them, reorders them, and places them in new juxtaposition. By presenting these graphic stimuli in either printed or audiovisual formats in such a way that they tend to elicit desired responses from his users, he has taken a giant step beyond his more traditional library bound colleagues. Their perception of their role as mediators between man and his graphic records tends to dim after they have created physical and intellectual access to the desired information, and given innocuous and noncommital levels of interpretative assistance to their clients.

The media specialist is knowledgeable about learning theory. He has studied Pavlov, Skinner, Glasser, Maslow, Piaget, Thorndike, Dewey, James, and others. He knows about the behavior modification model, developmental models, and information processing models. He has thought through the relationship of behavioral principles to the school media program, and does not hesitate to apply these theories. A quarter of a century of audiovisual research has shown no significant correlations between learning behavior and different media. He is therefore suspicious of claims about the superiority of any one medium over another. Rather than betraying his annoyance or impatience with the hundredth student who has failed to use the card catalog in his quest for information, he accompanies the student to the catalog and observes his work, providing positive reinforcement in the form of praise, encouragement, and whatever additional clues are required, until the student has experienced success in his information quest.

The media specialist does not regard his responsibility as being fulfilled once he has assured himself that the student has found the item requested. He continues to provide his assistance until he is certain the student is having no difficulty in interpreting whatever information is required. Further, if he and his teaching

colleagues wish to provide for some sort of behavioral change in their students through media, he and they keep working together until the desired change is observed. Likewise, if students wish to share their newly found information with others or to create a multi-media presentation as part of the process of psychologically internalizing their new information, the media specialist will advise and assist them until they do. The media specialist in the open school has come a long way from the librarian who holds his clients at such distances that service is rarely extended beyond the bare bones of information. Yet, he is motivated by the same basic respect for freedom and privacy in learning that characterizes the information scientist, but which produces among some a more formal and conservative stance.

Earlier in this discussion a statement was made to the effect that the media specialist in the open school works with a wide variety of materials and equipment. One of the common complaints against open education is that it does not give enough attention the "basics." In librarianship, a parallel claim continues to rise from a still rather vocal and excitable minority who believe in all sincerity that "books are basic" and to whom non-book materials and electronic or mechanical equipment seem beyond the pale of the profession.

Conscience and duty compel one to gently reassure the critics in both camps that the importance of books, reading, and other basics are not overlooked either in the open school or its media center. The basics are recognized as the backbone of education, in both media centers and open schools, and both assign considerable emphasis to all of the basics within the structures of their programs. What has happened, and is happening in reading and the other basic skill areas, is that, by the combination of the best from both the media movement and the open education movement, a multiplicity of approaches to learning has been made available to each child. Further, each child has many more opportunities to read and learn from more sources, about a greater variety of subjects, in more depth, and more frequently than in traditional schools.

For well over a quarter of a century educational leadership has been advocating the abandonment of the single textbook approach to learning. Media centers and open schools have done much to banish this restrictive educational tool in the last several years.

In the late 1950's and early 1960's some heady ideas were bursting upon the educational scene. An ex-admiral martialed hoards of better-than-ever-educated citizens to direct their volleys of unending criticism toward the schools. A leading economist advised us that we lived in an age of affluence, and a prominent social philosopher put forth some important notions about the kinds of excellence toward which we should be aiming.* When the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was introduced many librarians had already done some dipping into the trough through the National Defense Education Act. This enabled them to set an exciting and fast-paced course toward some of the excellence about which they had dreamed. NDEA had brought them close enough to the audiovisual movement for them to begin to examine some of the benefits which might be derived from moving along with the flow.

One of the old ideas which quickly wore thin was that school library collections needed to stop growing after they had reached the standard numbers of trade books, reference books, periodicals, and newspapers. Vision was broadened to include the instructional materials horizon, and acquisition habits changed. There was an increased understanding of, and tolerance for, all kinds of instructional materials. A practice which is particularly strong in the open schools is the utilization of multiple sets of texts. Instead of buying several hundred copies of one text to be read by all students at the same time, increasing numbers of schools were buying several copies of many different texts to be used by children at any grade level when they were ready for them.

School administrators were quick to find out that school librarians had a well developed set of routines which could easily be adapted for the handling of these many materials. More and more often they became part of the library collection. The librarians, on the other hand, didn't protest. For the first time in history they were receiving substantial amounts of revenue to support their programs. The increased availability of more and different kinds of materials had made it inevitable that change overtake them. One more change didn't matter that much, once the momentum had built up, especially as it enhanced their status within the school community and was often accompanied by increased clerical and technical staff.

Meanwhile the crafty school administrator, who quite often had started out increasing his support of the "library cum media

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*Admiral Heyman Rickover, John Kenneth Galbraith, and John W. Gardner, respectively

center" as a means of getting a knotty problem out of his office, discovered that he was getting more from his equipment and materials dollars than at any time in the past. Media and equipment organized into a fully integrated program, with someone devoting full professional time to its promotion and use, paid off an unanticipated dividend in terms of better instruction and therefore increased learning. Not only was he pleased with this bit of serendipity, but when he looked around his own office, he found that he had delegated the responsibility for much of the nitty-gritty that had hampered his own mode of operation to a team of people who were coping with it most competently. He was free to upgrade his own contribution to the educational program. He was able now to spend more time in the supervision, evaluation, and the improvement of instruction.

The Media Specialist in Administration

The new relationship between the media specialist and the school administrator is worth further attention. As a group (with the possible exception of those administrators who are managing store front schools, guerilla schools, and similar operations where some very acute social and economic needs in the community currently have justifiable priorities in their programs) administrators in open schools appear to have a much better grasp of the media center concept and to be much more active and aggressive in supporting programs than administrators in traditional schools.

Some rather provocative things are occurring which to this writer's knowledge hitherto have gone unreported. In one school the media specialist has been given the title and is functioning as an administrative intern. In another school, in a city where the general policy is to provide space and materials but no staff for media services, an assistant principal has been assigned the task of implementing the school media program. While the assistant principal does not perceive herself as a media specialist and is most humble about her lack of professional background for the job she is doing, the program that she has developed exhibits most of the earmarks of a good one. Only the technicalities of some of her improvisations are disconcerting. She is doing a commendable job of bringing together teachers, children, and resources, and it is administrative skills, not media skills, which have enabled her to function successfully in this assignment.

In a third school, one in which efforts to move ahead with the

media center have been blocked by firm district-wide teacher-pupil ratio formulas, the principal has scheduled himself to work in the media center for a portion of every day along with a professional staff member, an aide, and a large number of volunteers. Students in this school use the media center on an average of more than once a day, while the district-wide average attendance in media centers is about one and a half times a week.

In a very large and complex high school the assistant principal for curriculum recently confided that they didn't know quite what to do with their media person, but they were including him in their administrative council meetings because they could not function as effectively and efficiently as they would like without him. In several open schools the media specialists have standing appointments to work with the principals one or more times a week.

Dr. Edythe J. Gaines, Superintendent of the Community School District No. 12, Bronx, New York, in an article in *Nation's Schools* asserts that, "Media specialists are beginning to assume new responsibilities in education's middle management." Many media specialists, if they had time to analyze their media programs and their role within the school, would find that they have administrative responsibility for time, space, materials, equipment, and people in the process of getting the job of education done. In some schools this new role has caused conflict between the media specialist and the principal.

In many of the open schools this problem has either been formally identified and dealt with, or both principals and media specialists have worked it out on a more intuitive level, drawing upon some of those extraordinary human-relations abilities that all the authorities recognize as essential for working in the open schools. Almost without exception, where the media program is functioning as it should in the open school, there is evidence of a much higher level of media specialist involvement in administrative activity with the principal, particularly in goal setting, program and fiscal planning, curriculum design, and evaluation. After the human resourcefulness of the media specialist, which has already been cited as the prime ingredient for success in the media program, this new relationship with school administrators comes forth as the next most important ingredient in an open school operation.

Materials—Selection, Production, & Dissemination

A media specialist, learning from his education colleague, does not hesitate to balance out the collection with some controlled vocabulary materials and guide those children to them who might otherwise have a difficult time with a book valued as literature. He does not stop here but includes games based on basic vocabulary lists in the collection, and makes up flash cards or language master cards that can be borrowed and used by children who need lots and lots of practice with these very basic sets of words before they can move on to more complicated reading skills and activities.

Similarly, the media specialist has brought himself to ask the question, If children are reported by literary experts to enjoy and identify strongly with much of the repetition in the folk tales, then why is repetition in beginning reading materials ridiculed? Classroom experience has demonstrated repetition to be one way in which some children learn best. It is also the best way to learn certain selected tasks. Materials with a high repetition element have their place in the spectrum of learning tools. The media specialist includes a representative selection of them in the collection and puts them to good use when they are needed.

The nature of the textbook is itself changing. Quite often a textbook is no longer a textbook. It has been superceded by a program. A program may consist of any one of a number of things, but quite often it is a package of many different kinds of media which are to be used together as a text. Such a package might include multiple copies of a paperback that would pass as a text, but it might also include 16 millimeter films, filmstrips, recordings, games, replicas or facsimiles of primary source materials, manipulative objects, sometimes even balloons for blowing, or biological specimens of something as far out as planeria, which students may borrow long enough to teach to run a T maze. You name it, and it just might be part of one of the new learning packages.

One of the best ways of disbursing these new learning packages, generally too expensive for the individual classroom, is to put them in the media center. They actually get more use when they are centrally housed and made available to all instead of being hidden away inaccessibly in one classroom.

Another category of instructional materials that is playing a vital role in the opening-up of education is programmed materials and other empirically developed materials. There are still any number

of traditional librarians who regard programmed texts as non-books and who refuse to have any part of them, even though many are printed and come in hard bindings. Other programmed materials incorporate audiovisual media. Some are stored into computers as in the famous project PLATO. Others are the products of some of the regional educational laboratories, such as the aesthetics program developed by CEMREL. These materials are popular with some students in that they let them learn in small stages and do not necessarily require that they have to encounter a live teacher to learn what they wish. Mathematics materials seem to be highly successful in these kinds of formats. They are reliably successful with a high percentage of students. Sometimes brighter students claim that the programs are dull. Perhaps they are. Perhaps the brighter students might have been placed into programs where the objectives were broader in scope and more complicated in nature.

At any rate media specialists are attuned to this movement in the development of materials. When confronted with such a package they ply its sales person with questions about the developmental testing which was done on their programmed products. They check to see if pre-tests and post-tests are included and whether or not they are actually parallel tests. They look into validity and reliability quotients. If necessary, they can perform a task analysis, design and edit a program, complete its developmental testing, and establish the validity and reliability data themselves. More often though, the media specialist serves a teacher in an advisory capacity when the teacher wishes to develop a program of his own.

At a lesser level of sophistication, media specialists create or help others create simple learning packages such as a jigsaw puzzle made of tear sheets laminated to poster board, a slide-tape presentation on the local fire department, transparencies, a math lesson worked around a food ad from the local newspaper, a nutrition lesson based on a menu from a local restaurant, a map reading lesson from a county map, a word wheel, a simulation game, or a shoe box science experiment. Sometimes the learning packages are deposited in the media center and shared by the whole school. Sometimes they become part of a classroom learning center.* They are almost always something which children especially look forward to using.

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*For a description of a learning center see Mark Weber's article in this issue.

More important than the commercially prepared materials and the materials prepared by the very best of media specialists, teachers, and technicians, are the materials made by students themselves. They are both the product and process of learning. This stands out over and above all other kinds of media utilization as the most effective and exciting part of the modern media program. Yet many schools hold back when it comes to adding the production component to their media services programs. To be sure, production can be messy, but children can and should be taught to clean up after themselves.

To those who claim that production is too difficult, the answer is that anyone who has ever grilled a cheese sandwich can laminate. The instamatic type camera makes picture taking about as simple, enjoyable, and fool proof as any bit of technology on the market. The hardest thing about getting started is wangling the copy machine from the school secretary.

Community Resources

One more set of resources needs to be discussed before the topic of materials is left behind. These are the resources within the community. Human beings as resources seem to take on more importance in open schools than in conventional schools. The open schools are more likely to use field trips and community service projects as learning experiences. Ecology projects, consumer education projects, trips to local governmental units, public service agencies, businesses, industries, and cultural centers are more frequently arranged. The incidence of resource persons as visitors and instructors in the open schools is also higher. Again, the firemen, policemen, and other public servants are favorites. Some schools have scheduled coffeehouse-type seminars with local artists, writers, and craftsmen participating. Vocational and career days are popular in the secondary schools. High school and college students are often called upon to work with children in the open schools, sharing their guitars, their interests in astrology and the occult, magic acts, and so forth. One of the favorite variations on the in-school use of people as resources is to have minicourses developed by persons both inside and outside the formal school organization. Another is to have free choice days for which the students decide what they shall study for the day, identify and invite whomever they wish to be their teachers, and then spend the whole day with whatever local talent they have invited. This often gives a chance for students to see their

teacher's avocations. Students are sometimes surprised to learn that the football coach is an excellent cook, and the little old Latin teacher holds a brown belt. Mother might come to school to teach macrame for the day, and father might offer a short session on the repair of simple home appliances, or better still, vice versa. Media services personnel frequently do much of the organizational work on these various programs. A community resources file or handbook often evolves out of such projects, listing people and places that have been successfully involved in the open school program and are willing to be called on again.[2]

Volunteers

The media center volunteer is a very special community resource. While some media specialists still protest their presence in the media program, their use in the media center is really one of the most popular applications of the volunteer movement in the schools. Many media programs simply could not function without volunteer assistance. Even those staffed according to ALA-NEA standards find that some of the new learning programs and packages, require an ever higher adult-pupil ratio in the school. The functions of the volunteer are usually at the paraprofessional level. They perform many of the same tasks that paid aides and technicians perform. We often find retired teachers, librarians, and student teachers in the act. The teachers and student teachers make excellent tutors for remedial work. Often they set up their "clinics" at a media center table or in one of the media conference rooms. They are quite often given responsibility for carrying out small-group enrichment activities. Student teachers especially like to work with audiovisual media. Librarians tend to work on the catalog, generate special indexes and bibliographies, or work out special storytelling and book talk programs that the regularly assigned staff might not have time to develop. The media center in the open school probably has had more participation in the utilization of differentiated staffing patterns than any other unit within the organizational structure.

Evaluation and Selection of Materials

To a greater extent than his colleagues in public libraries and in more traditional schools, the media specialist in the open school serves to coordinate the selection process, rather than carry out all the selection. The selection process may be said to be moving

in two different directions at the same time, depending on the type of media. Insofar as printed materials are concerned, the effort is in the direction of broadening the decision-making base. The involvement of students in the evaluation of printed materials and more extensive efforts to get teachers involved in evaluating and recommending printed materials stand out. Success with students has been remarkable. Involvement of the busy teacher has moved along more slowly.

Teachers have traditionally been far more involved in and more autonomous in their selection of audiovisual materials. Here the trend is toward centralization, upgrading, and increased control over the selection process by the media specialist. Centralization of audiovisual collections where no previous pattern of centralization existed has probably been a slower and more painful process than the centralization of book collections. Teachers tend to view audiovisual materials as stronger teaching aids than printed materials. It is harder for them to perceive of audiovisual materials as alternate information formats suitable for individualized and independent research and study. A common complaint is the one formerly heard in connection with books—teaching isn't as effective as when the students have been exposed to the materials beforehand. Research bears out the fact that students sometimes remember more and longer that which they have seen and heard than that which they have read. The basic issue, though, is whether the teacher's desire to teach in a given manner precludes the student's right to learn what he wants to learn when he is ready to learn it. Authorities are generally agreed on this subject. The learner's rights are basic. The teacher facilitates the learning process. That's what the opening up of learning is all about.

Finding time for previewing audiovisual materials is becoming as difficult a problem as finding time to participate in book selection. Several locales are experimenting with over-the-air previewing via their local educational television set-up. While there has been some squabbling about broadcast rights, breakthroughs are being made with the cable and ITFS installations. This writer knows of no one who is currently experimenting with the compressed speech machines for cutting down preview time for audio materials. However, it stands to reason that this should be one of the applications of the compressed sound technology that should soon be forthcoming. Likewise, the writer is not aware of any case where time for evaluating media has been a central issue in teacher contract negotiations, but rest assured that before long it will be.

The upgrading of the selection of audiovisual materials and the resulting improvements in utilization continue to be a problem, but not so severe as it was perhaps five years ago. As librarians have entered strongly into the audiovisual movement, they have been articulate and aggressive in setting high selection standards and criteria. While the production of audiovisual materials does not seem to have tapered off, the quality of the products is gradually getting better, especially among the larger and well established producers.

The librarian's insistence on better and more widespread reviewing of materials has resulted in the expansion of the review section of *Book List and Subscription Books Bulletin*. *Previews* has outgrown its parent publication, *School Library Journal*. The new bulletin from the University of Chicago is also promising. *Multi-Media Reviews Index* creates access to a surprising number of evaluative statements. The reviews themselves still tend to be descriptive at the expense of being comparative and generally do not give enough detail about possible utilization. It would appear that many of the reviewers do not have enough access yet to large enough collections to be able to make truly sound comparisons. As libraries enlarge their non-print media collection this aspect of reviewing should improve. Utilization is tricky, too. The use and increased precision of behavioral objectives should assist us in making judgments concerning utilization. Many improvements have been made in the reviewing of 16 millimeter films and filmstrips. There seems to be room for improvement in both disc and tape recordings. More widespread attention might be given to non-musical recordings. Also someone might start to give more serious attention to sorting out from the classical music reviews those recordings which are particularly appealing to, and appropriate for, children and young adults as listeners. The reviewing is least effective when it comes to transparencies, study prints, art prints, posters, other graphic materials, and of course, the large learning packages which border on text materials.

Cataloging and Classification

There is much more cause for optimism about the improvement in the selection and evaluation of materials for learning than there is about their cataloging and classification.

Cataloging and classification of printed materials has been a relatively settled issue for many years. The system is working

fairly well. Yet, one sometimes wonders why media specialists are not making more demands of it. The question which follows has arisen mostly from experiences with children, books, and computers, and is more directly and readily applicable to printed materials, but does have application to both printed and audio visual materials. Why haven't we asked for a finer level of subject analysis than is currently available? One of the reasons for the alleged decline of the book's popularity is that quite often the book provides too much information in a larger and longer package than the user needs. Schools that have moved to modular scheduling usually work on a 15 minute module. The learning activities that can be fit into a 15 or 30 minute time period are close to the length of a chapter of a book. Learning objectives also tend to be narrower than the scope of an entire book. Filmstrips and recordings seem to fit more readily into the abbreviated temporal patterns. It seems appropriate that we suggest a reconsideration of what levels of access it is possible and desirable o achieve for children's learning materials. When we consider the power of computer technology and the fact that the spectrum of juvenile publishing is about 2,500 new titles each year, the suggestion to expand subject access from 3 or so headings to 15, about the level given in an average table of contents, or better still, to the level of the index, may be worthy of serious contemplation.

Better subject access to audiovisual materials is often even more important. First, the negative aspects which closed shelving practices present must be considered. Open schools have tended to lead in open shelving of audiovisual materials. Integrated shelving of both print and non-print materials has been tried in several locations.

Accessibility to audiovisual materials is further limited by the format characteristics of the very materials themselves. Browsing through a film collection, for example, is next to impossible. The technology to permit something akin to browsing is not too remote. Fast forward mechanisms have been developed for projectors. Footage counters might be adapted to serve as place indicators. Second sound channels might provide a specific access point in much the same way they currently provide the change signal for sound filmstrips and slide-tape presentations. Yet nobody has quite got it all together. Also, the demand has been slow in growing. If we may consider the catalogs of most of the largest university film libraries in the country as typical of the state of the art, there is vast room for improvement.[3] In the

light of the cost of film footage compared to the costs of some of the other audiovisual formats this helter-skelter approach is particularly difficult to justify. The user is more dependent on the audiovisual cataloger to provide access to audiovisual collections than on the book cataloger to provide access to printed collections since audiovisual materials do not usually possess indexes or tables of contents. The inadequacies in the present system cannot all be attributed to the slow merging of the vastly different approaches to cataloging developed by librarians on one hand and audiovisual specialists on the other. Nor can they be entirely excused on the basis of the rapidity with which new developments are occurring in the audiovisual field. Catalogers themselves must assume part of the responsibility.

A related suggestion is that in many cases similar improvement needs to be made in providing title access to children's recordings. Standard cataloging rarely gives title access to long playing recordings where perhaps 15 to 25 nursery rhymes, short songs, or poems are included. Quite often more refined and more direct access to titles is genuinely needed too.

When commercial cataloging agencies are pressed for better services on audiovisual materials, their reply is that they cannot afford to do any better and that the market has not standardized enough to permit the increase or expansion of service. Even though there are several widely recognized sets of guidelines and handbooks for audiovisual cataloging, none have apparently been sufficiently comprehensive and clear to be adopted by enough media centers to have affected the level of bibliographic control over audiovisual materials that would enable the much needed commercial cataloging services to develop to their fullest potential. High professional priority needs to be placed on the solution of this problem. Library of Congress information on 16 millimeter films, filmstrips, and recordings needs to be disseminated more rapidly and more widely adopted. Much more serious attention needs to be given to slide sets, transparencies, study prints, art prints, games, and audiovisual media other than that cataloged by the Library of Congress. The large learning packages and programs are truly complicated cases in point. One currently on the market has over 1200 different items, not counting consumables, which are to be purchased in conjunction with its use.

If this criticism seems strong it is because service to over 50

million school children is at stake. This fact should carry enough weight in itself to motivate better efforts on the part of the profession. When one considers that this group of school children comprises the largest single group of actual library users in the country, the case for reassessment and realignment of cataloging priorities gains strength. Much progress has been made during the last ten years, but even after we've been as generous as we know how in judging all those who have participated in these high level conferences and deliberations, the bald question still remains—just what are we prepared to do about that planeria that learns to run a T maze?

Behavioral Descriptors

As the behavioral sciences mature and behavioral technology builds, the kinds of descriptors or subject headings used to describe materials seem to become less and less relevant to the user's needs. Behavioral technology, and its off-shoot, educational technology, are predicated on behavioral change. Change is an action or a motion occurring across time. Subject headings do not project this dynamic potential. If media centers in the schools, and other types of libraries, are to keep pace in a technological society, some new dimensions are going to be necessary in our catalogs. Materials need to be described in terms of the changes in human behavior which can be reasonably anticipated as the result of human beings having interacted or interfaced with them. Education is at the forefront of the applications of behavioral technology. Why aren't the media specialists asking this question and making this demand of catalogers? How do we move from description of materials as static objects to description of materials according to their power to elicit behavioral or social change? Librarians have believed for a long time and spoken out most eloquently about the power of books to change the world. Why then are there no serious efforts afoot to index this power?

Yet another question is, Should we not also be seriously seeking non-verbal ways of accessing visual materials? This question is far from simple. It is based upon the evidence which seems to indicate that certain levels of visual literacy precede language development. It is also related to the impact that the visual element in television has had in the shaping of behavior over the last several decades and the power of this and certain other audiovisual technologies to present more of certain kinds of information to vastly larger audiences in much less time than can

ever be expected of printed materials. In addition the question is tied to the notion that when presented with concrete objects or their equivalent, in one or another of the visual formats, the response is believed to be far more general across all classifications of human beings than the response to verbal stimuli in either oral or written codes. There is an intriguing connection, too, with the experiments which give rise to the claim that human intelligence may begin in the development of visual responses to moving objects.

Today it is a quantum leap from these scattered observations and bits and pieces of research and theory to the question that has been posed. Twenty-five years from now that distance may have narrowed considerably, and perhaps one or another of the possible paths suggested above may take on considerably more importance. It is nevertheless interesting to speculate about the direction such probes might take. Might the ultimate answer be the kind of visual matching activity that presently occurs in the mind's eye when using one of the catalogs of art prints which presents a postage-stamp size black and white reproduction of the work of art under consideration? Or is it closer to some of the sensing devices developed by the Department of Defense for their robots to explore the moon and planets?

Out of a little bit of chaos a great good has come. To be sure, open schools are such busy places that they appear to be pretty messy and unorganized much of the time. The media center is no exception. Since it is where much of the action takes place, it tends to be even a bit more chaotic in appe[illegible]nce than some of the other parts of the school. Some anonym[illegible]g immortalized it this way:

Barely Visible

My desk is always piled with work.
I do not understand the jerk
Who keeps his nasty-neat and bare
How can he work with nothing there?

The media specialist serving in the open schools has to be one of the best organized persons in the world. His schedule and

the demands upon his time and talents are unbelievable. If he hasn't gotten around to putting the catalogers on notice that they need to be considering better ways of describing and organizing multi-media collections for open education, it is to his credit that he has been much too busy serving children to analyze some of the issues in the depth they deserve.

As we conclude this discussion it is with a great deal of respect for the media men and maids who have pioneered the way. They have been regarded as the illegitimate children of the profession by far too many, for far too long. It is probably much more accurate to characterize them as professionally free souls who have dared to dream some rather impossible dreams about what schools and libraries ought to be, and who had both the good luck and good sense to be able to do something about them. Through their example and their spirit they are opening the way for many of the rest of us. Therein we find the greatest value of media services in the open school.

Notes

1 Edythe J. Gaines, "Accountability: Getting Out of the Tangled Web," *Nation's Schools*, October 1971, pp. 55-58.

2 Sylvia Marantz, "Turned On, Not Punched Out: People in a Human Resources File," *School Libraries*, Winter 1969, pp. 49-53.

3 John S. Whyde, "Comparison of the Subject Headings Assigned by Eight Major University Film Libraries with Those Assigned by the Library of Congress and an Analysis of the Deviation of the Former from the Latter," (unpublished master's thesis, Kent State University, 1973).

The Media Specialist and Children: An Open Classroom Approach

Mark W. Weber

I hear. . .and I forget
I see. . .and I remember
I do. . .and I understand

- - - Ancient Chinese Proverb

The British Infant School

In the course of the past decade, scores of American educators and journalists, seeking at least a partial answer to the myriad of trials which regularly afflict American public education, have journeyed to England to visit some of the most vibrant, vital educational programs to be seen anywhere, the British infant, or primary schools.* These are chools for children ages 5, 6, and 7. The most exciting of these schools have moved to an educational program characterized as *open education*.

In general, open education in British primary schools has the following characteristics: many of the classes are *family-grouped*; the time schedule is built around the *integrated day*; and the classrooms are divided into *interest centers*.

When visiting an English primary school one becomes immediately aware of its organization. Many of the classes are *family-grouped* with children of two or three different age levels in the same class. In family groups older students help

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*Some of the most penetrating descriptions of the British Infant School have been offered by Joseph Featherstone in a series of articles in the *New Republic*. Reprints of the Featherstone articles are available through the *New Republic*, 1244 West 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

younger ones and each child progresses at his own rate, not pushed on because of age. It is therefore possible, that in a small group studying community helpers for example, there will be 6, 7, and 8 year olds all working together. In addition, the time schedule of the British primary school is different from that of American schools. Apart from special times like lunch break, there may be no fixed periods at all. Instead, there is an *integrated day* in which many different subjects are taught or a wide variety of activities are held at the same time with the children working individually or in small groups. The teacher ceases to lecture to the students as a group, but moves quickly from one group to the next, helping the children to learn in their own fashion.

Next, the British primary school classroom is organized into *interest centers*. In each center a rich variety of materials, supplies, and equipment is provided for the children's independent use. There is a reading center, a math center, a play center, and other centers devoted to what is presently going on in the classroom. Interest centers are used as a vehicle to not only carry out the current learning goals of the classroom but also to open new vistas to the children. Each classroom will be different; each will represent the interests and styles of the teacher and children who live, work, and play there.

The notion held by many American observers of the British primary school, that the open school, a British institution, can simply be superimposed on an American community, is a romantic one.

> For an American audience, after all, the critical question is not whether informal education works well in England, but whether it can work as well in the United States.[1]

Instead, American models of the open classroom need to be developed.[2] At an early childhood level it often means the elimination of structural barriers that impede the child's learning. Some of these barriers are traditional class scheduling, age-grade norms as determiners of specific programs, and perhaps even the walls of the classroom which restrict the movement of children.* It is important to emphasize that each aspect of the British Infant School (i.e., the integrated day, family grouping,

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*In Oak Park, Illinois excellent work has been done with buildings to establish open space areas in five of the community's ten public elementary schools.

and interest centers) should be studied carefully by teachers and administrators of a particular community and then implemented classroom-by-classroom, taking into account that children will vary from neighborhood to neighborhood and school to school.*

> Careful work on a small scale is the way to start reform worth having. . .The proper locus of a revolution in the primary schools. . . .is a teacher in a classroom full of children.[3]

Children and Learning

> The goal in education is not to increase the amount of knowledge, but to create possibilities for a child to invent and discover knowledge on his own.
>
> — **Jean Piaget**

Before an elementary school media specialist can function effectively in an open classroom environment, he or she must understand and accept some basic assumptions about children, assumptions which form the basis of open education. The media center should reflect this common core of basic beliefs about children's growth and development.

Children have different rates of learning. The media specialist must recognize that some children will learn certain skills rapidly while others will pick them up at a slower pace. This belief is best expressed by Bernard Spodex:

> Each child is considered an individual. Children aren't expected to be involved in an activity because it is the thing for fives to do. If a five year old is ready to read, he may. If he is not, well, he has another year or two to learn.[4]

In short, what is important is not the chronological age of a given child, but rather the child's own learning stage.

Children learn in different ways. Just as children learn at different rates, they also learn in different ways. One child may be able to sit at a task for a long period of time, gradually picking up bits of information and building ideas. However, another child may have less persistence; after fifteen minutes this child may need to stop and change activities. Later, the child will return to the initial activity with renewed vigor and interest. The following description

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* A brief overview of the basic tenets of the open classroom can be found in *The British Infant School*, which is available from Institute for Development of Educational Activities, P.O. Box 628, Far Hills Branch, Dayton, Ohio 45419.

vividly illustrates the different ways in which children may learn:

> Children frequently work in small groups or as individuals, exploring, building, reading, listening or discussing. They wander from one 'activity bay' to another, reading a book, writing a story, 'selling' milk to classmates in a model shop, designing the sections of a mural, or following a series of teacher-prepared task cards.[5]

Children learn from both individual and group experiences. Although the basis of the open classroom philosophy is the dignity of the individual child, this does not mean that the children must always act in an individual way. Children also need group experiences. They naturally want to work together, to discover together, and to share. Children learn from themselves and they learn from others. They learn from their peers and they learn from adults. Group activities help the children develop attitudes, not only about the specific activity, but also about cooperation, competition, and organization. The child learns to deal, not only with his own feelings, but also with the feelings of other children.

Children learn best when they are actively involved. Most learning experiences in the open classroom are activities in which the children participate. In the Spring of 1971, some students of Vincent R. Rogers spent some time observing and describing the learning activities in the Dover Road School in Kent, England.[6] The following excerpt is typical of the intense activity of most learning experiences in the British primary school:

> TWO GIRLS completing maps of Japan for their own books on Japan—TWO BOYS and TWO GIRLS working on writing and illustrations for their own books on Japan—ONE GIRL copying Japanese painting—ONE BOY copying different Japanese painting in the same way—all at long group of desks at back of room.[7]

Thus, in the open classroom environment the children are active and excited, whereas in traditional learning settings children are often passive and compliant.

Children's interests are varied and transitory. There are times when a child becomes fascinated with an idea, a subject, or a hobby. He may spend days or even weeks studying about snakes or building model airplanes. Not every child will develop these special interests, but even those who do should find new interests

to enjoy from the wide variety of materials which are a part of any learning environment in an open classroom. Thus, the open classroom should offer children a range of opportunities related to the personal interests of each child, and based on his need to understand and grow through his own experiences.[8]

Freedom and Decision Making Power For Children

In addition to being committed to a series of assumptions about the growth and development of the child, the media specialist must be prepared to allow the children of an open classroom to assume new initiatives.[9] This relates to the amount of freedom and decision making power that children are permitted. The following five assumptions specifically mean that the child's enjoyment of school is intimately connected with an expansion of the child's self-direction and decision making.

Children seem to enjoy a learning situation which offers them a variety of *options* each day. In the open classroom a wide variety of activities are open to the children: physical activities involving such concrete materials as blocks or games or symbolic or abstract activities involving numbers, words, or books.

Children also seem more anxious to participate in learning situations where they will be accorded a significant *choice* in determining the activities in which they will be engaged. For example, in some schools the day's activities are listed on a bulletin board. Each morning, each child places his or her name card beside the activity card in which he would like to work that day. The choices are serious ones because the child realizes his work will probably affect the work of others in the room.

The child's freedom, autonomy, and independence—as well as his responsibility—are often epitomized by the large and elaborate charts (often with pictures or otherwise decorated) to be seen around an open school room or learning area. They are the "activity charts" and they list

> . . .by words and appropriate pictures all the possible activities in the room: from reading, typing, playground, pointing right through to visiting and gerbils. Next to each there are several hooks on which the child hangs his name tag to indicate what he's doing. A simple device, but it says much about the respect for the child and the relationship between the child, the teacher, and the room.[10]

A child's enjoyment of school is directly and intimately related to his being permitted to *pose his own problems* and determine the manner in which he will pursue them. In open classrooms, problems are more often posed by the materials available than by the teacher. For example, the existence of pets may suggest to a child that he should clock their speeds on the teacher's watch and then compare the results on a graph.

Children seem more comfortable in learning environments where they are able to *share* their experiences with their peers. In some schools this collaboration among students may be viewed as "talking" or "cheating:" in the open classroom it is viewed as valuable social behavior and is encouraged.[11] The child who, with only a battery, a bulb, and a wire, succeeds in making "light" will quickly run to show others how he did it. Together, with their combined resources, the several children may decide to construct a brighter light. Casey and Morrow describe this freedom to talk in a British primary school.

> . . .children throughout England are encouraged to talk to one another while they work; they move around the room and the school freely. A teacher who believes that children learn through conversation with others and through deep involvement—whether physical, emotional, or intellectual—with the materials at hand will not be excessively occupied with maintaining "order," "silence," or "control."[12]

Finally, a child's enjoyment of school is related to the extent to which he is *trusted* by adults. Teachers in the British Infant Schools generally operate on the principle that "I can trust a child until he gives me some reason not to, and then I will be more cautious about trusting him in this particular area." In writing their book on practical ways to implement the open classroom model in the American school setting, Alvin F. Hertzberg and Edward F. Stone write the following about trust:

> We could not help contrasting this respect for the child with the attitude prevalent in many of our own classrooms: a child's spelling paper must be corrected by the teacher so he won't cheat; the child must be given a test to be sure he has covered certain material; a child can't talk to his neighbor, because then he wouldn't be doing his "own work." In a way, our method of working with children seems to say that we don't really trust children to be on their own. Why else would we schedule the child so heavily, make sure that the subject areas are covered in a certain order, hold on to grading, marking, and rating, and attempt to homogenize children into workable groups?[13]

In conclusion, the media specialist must realize that the above-mentioned conditions are the vital ingredients which comprise the single most important aspect of the open classroom environment: the unusually high quality of child-to-child interaction. Students talk to and help one another throughout the day. Groups form, dissolve, and regroup. This enables the children to rely less on the teacher and more on the materials and resources available to them. They become independent learners who are able to concentrate on one interest for an extended period of time.

The Role Of The Media Specialist In Open Schools

> As a library program becomes more meaningful, it is more closely identified with the total instructional program, so that its ultimate success is really to put itself, as a separate program, out of business.
>
> **- - - Marguerite Murray**

Having internalized the above-mentioned attitudes which relate to the child's development and to the child's participation in the learning process, the media specialist must then attempt to apply these attitudes in the performance of his professional role in the media center.

. . . as facilitator

First, the media specialist must be a *facilitator* of knowledge rather than a source of knowledge. Just as teachers are urged to give up their veneration of the traditional textbook, so the media specialist must relinquish his "textbook frame of mind," which says that he is the final authority on all questions. The role of facilitator is well described by Sir Alec Clegg:

> The teacher tends to conceal or withhold his knowledge rather than reveal it. He does this in the hope that the child will seek knowledge elsewhere and that child and teacher will find out together.[14]

For example, while viewing several filmstrips on snakes, the children want to know the name of the brightly colored orange and black one; the media specialist should attempt to pose questions which will encourage the children to perhaps continue their search in a book on reptiles. It is important for a media specialist to realize that the children, through trial and error and through their own discussions, should "discover"

the source of the answer to their question, rather than having the media specialist act as a reference librarian and merely deliver the desired book into the children's hands. As a facilitator, the media specialist must carefully nurture all fledgling learning experiences of children rather than merely deliver the factual goods.

In addition, for the elementary school media specialist, the teaching of media center skills can be a good case study of the functioning of the media specialist as a facilitator. Increasingly, the adoption of programmed media center skills kits has enabled each student to work independently and at his own pace.* At the conclusion of a particular unit, the child is entrusted with the task of correcting his worksheet and going over his mistakes to understand how he made them. A programmed instructional approach to media center skills allows the media specialist to work individually with a child who is having trouble understanding the basic parts of a catalog card, while enabling another child to work ahead, perhaps on specialized reference materials. Eventually, through the development and implementation of a media center skills kit, the process of learning media center skills will become an incidental one with children coming individually or in small groups to the media center to take up their programmed units where they left off the day before or the week before.

. . . as organizer of material

Second, the media specialist must develop his role as an *organizer* of the subject matter content of the media center. One of the ways to do this is through the construction of multi-media interest group displays.

To begin with, just as the open classroom is organized with a series of "bays" dealing with such activities as music, math, reading, cooking, and science, so the media center must develop its own "learning centers."[15] The following description was offered by a group of American, British, and Israeli educators who observed and studied the mechanics of the British open classroom:

> The rooms areas are as much of an extension of home as

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*In Oak Park, Illinois, Irene Hansen, media specialist at Hatch Elementary School, has developed "Bits to Basics," a programmed instruction kit for media center skills. Address inquiries to: Irene Hansen, Media Specialist, Hatch Elementary School, 1000 North Ridgeland Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois 60302.

> possible. They are equipped with tables for various kinds of activities and are arranged in conjunction with bookcases so that a number of alcoves are created in each room. The children and teachers call these secluded areas "corners." There is a math corner, an art corner, a reading corner, an area for play. . .as well as corners for other types of activities.'[6]

Perhaps the best way for the media specialist to develop these learning centers is to begin by listing a number of general topics which research has shown are always popular with young children. Such a list might include the following: sports, wild animals, cars, airplanes and trains, crafts (how to make things), and pets. Such a list would not be permanent and could be readily changed to correspond with whatever projects are currently under study in the open classrooms. After developing a list, the media specialist would then proceed to organize interest areas for the various subjects. The various interest areas might be secluded alcoves, carrels, or open tables which would contain a wide variety of multi-media learning materials (print and nonprint) and any needed equipment. In addition to the learning materials, the learning center might include pieces of realia. For example, in the learning center on pets a live hamster in a cage would add a sense of the concrete to the rich diversity of books, filmstrips, cassettes, and picture sets on pets.

Finally, the rationale for the development of the multi-media learning centers is based on two problems which continually occur in media center organization. The first problem is the tendency of traditional media center classification systems (contrary, of course, to their purpose) to disperse, under numerous detailed headings and in different physical locations, materials which should be grouped broadly together under general headings. This arrangement of materials in learning centers would encourage young children to use materials which might otherwise not be used because they might be physically dispersed.

The second problem is the reticence of many media specialists to integrate print and non-print materials in a single system. This means that even though access to print and nonprint materials can be gained through a common card catalogue, the actual print and nonprint collections are physically separated. However, the interest areas concept would bring together many materials, both print and nonprint, into a genuine multi-media learning experience.

. . . as designer of learning tools

Third, in order to supplement the interest areas concept, the media specialist must assume the role of *designer* of individual learning packages. The individual learning package might contain a book, a filmstrip, and some mounted homemade pictures, housed in a durable box and arranged on the shelf by a traditional media center classification system. The multi-media learning package would have an inventory sheet pasted on the side of the box. This would provide a list of the materials contained in the learning package and would enable the media center aide or student helper to tell quickly if any of the component parts of the learning package are missing. The package would also contain a pocket and card for easy circulation to the open classrooms and to students for home use.

The rationale for the designing of multi-media learning packages is fourfold. To begin with, the learning packages complement the interest areas by providing small packets which may be removed from the shelves and taken by children to a secluded area for use. This is in contrast to the multi-media interest areas, the materials of which should be used in that general area.

Secondly, individual learning packages increase media use. One film strip may find a variety of uses in many learning packages.

In addition, as with the learning centers, the individual learning package reinforces the concept of total integration of print and non-print materials—that is, multi-media education.

Finally, the individual learning package concept may offer a partial solution to the problem of adequate shelving for fully integrated multi-media collections. A summary of this problem is as follows:

> Ideally, all types of media should be shelved together. Integrated storage presents for the patron's benefit the broad range of media available on any subject. Such integration, however, cannot be practiced to its fullest extent until modular containers and facilities are devised which will permit varied sizes and shapes to be placed with books on standard library shelves.[17]

However, through the packaging of selected print and nonprint materials together in standard-sized containers, the media

specialist is able to achieve some measure of collection integration in shelves designed for books without purchasing large numbers of modular shelving and containers.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the media specialist must realize that as an adult in a room full of children, he has a unique role to play. The importance of the teacher or media specialist is one factor that many observers of the open classroom tend to overlook. This problem is perhaps adequately summarized by the following:

> The. . .common problem is the tendency to confuse the freedom of the open classroom with mere "chaos" and neglect of children. Often, conventional educators become so distracted by the children's spontaneity and informality that they overlook the diligent teacher planning and the richness of the prepared educational environment.[18]

Thus, having overlooked the role of the teacher in the open classroom, many prophets of the new education develop the romantic notion that somehow teachers don't matter and that children should merely be turned loose to "learn." Perhaps this attitude is expressed best by John Holt. He proposes that we should have

> . . .schools and classrooms in which each child in his own way can satisfy his curiosity, develop his abilities and talents, pursue his interests, and from the adults and older children around him get a glimpse of the great variety and richness of life. In short, the school must be a great smorgasbord of intellectual, artistic, creative, and athletic activities, from which each child could take whatever he wanted, and as much or little as he wanted.[19]

This passage clearly illustrates that one of the major factors which separates the advocates of the contemporary British open classroom from romantic critics like Holt is the firm belief that the teacher must play a central role in the classroom. Mary Brown and Norman Precious respond in this manner to Holt's proposal:

> We would add here that what the child wants and how much he wants is largely determined by his environment, and that the school and teacher must play a vital role in this choice.[20]

Another description of the role of the teacher and its importance to the open classroom situation further emphasizes the point.

> What is the role of the teacher in the informal classroom? Many things: organizer, manager, diagnostician, guide, facilitator, poser of questions, resource person—she is these and much more. In an informal classroom, the teacher is free to use competencies to meet specific needs of children at any given time. . . . Free to share the burden of learning with children, free from all those inhibiting factors which diminish her creativity and intelligence and skill, the teacher is only confined by commitment to teaching and concern for children's learning.[21]

What applies to the teacher and the classroom in these definitions applies equally to the media specialist and the media center or collection. The preceding analyses of the three facets of the media specialists role—facilitator of learning experiences, organizer of multi-media collections and designer of multi-media learning tools (kits and packages)—are in themselves argument against the romantic laissez faire approach to learning.

The roles of facilitator, organizer, and designer enable the media center program to be more meaningful since they closely identify the media center program with the total instructional program of the open classroom school. In effect, the ultimate goal of the media center in the open classroom school is to eliminate itself as a separate and different program.[22] The media center would eliminate its own demands that the child adhere to certain behavior patterns merely because he is in the media center. Rather, the behavior patterns that a child would follow in the open classroom and those which he would follow in the media center would become quite similar.

The Child And Media

> Play is the child's means of living and of understanding life.
>
> **- - - Susan Isaacs**

Just as facilitator, organizer, and designer refer to the professional roles of the media specialist in the open classroom environment, so there must be a corresponding humanist function which the media can perform. This humanist function has two major sources: play and children's literature.

First, teachers do not have to interest children in play. For the child, play is often the totality of experience. It is his task, his

work, and his natural means of expression. Imaginative play can actually create practical learning situations for children.[23] Play is important for a good affective learning environment because it helps the child think through solutions to problems, to be independent, to make choices, and to share and have fun. During play, the teacher can help to interpret for the child, guide him, ask questions, and help him express his ideas about what is occurring.

When one visits an open classroom in British primary schools, one will see children playing throughout the day. At the very beginning of the day, some children may pull out a game of chess and have a game. Then, throughout the course of the day, children will move from one kind of play to another. It is important to note that, unlike traditional classrooms where play is considered an earned activity if the child has done his lessons and "was good," the open classroom treats play as a normal part of living in the environment and it is all involved in real learning.

Thus, it is important for the media specialist to consider play an integral part of the learning environment of the media center. This can be done through the use of games in the media center. In general, the games fall into one or the other of two kinds. The first type is the commercially prepared game such as *Ghetto* (social studies), *The Winning Touch* (math), and *Space Travel* (language arts). Second, there are the games which the students themselves make. These games make a double contribution because not only do students learn by playing the game, but they also learn through constructing it.

Secondly, through the use of literature in the media center, the media specialist can attempt to extend the environment and range of experience of the child. A child may find that a flower can be identified, described, drawn, and written about, all valid activities. However, the beauty and wonder of the flower takes on new significance when encountered in a poem or other piece of literature. Therefore, books, on every kind of subject and aspect of the world around us, both past and present and at every level, must be at hand for use.

However, another world of books is also important—namely that of story and poetry. This is an environment in which the child can live in imagination, a world in which personal problems can be resolved and understood, and a world of rich experiences of both

past, present, and future. Through fiction, both prose and poetry, children can experience love, hate, kindness, cruelty, justice and injustice, and good and evil.

In general, the literature program of the media center can complement the work of the open classroom by reinforcing its values in the students. According to Patricia Cianciolo, it can do this by encouraging humanization, individualization, personalization, and I would add—writing.[24]

First, literature can accomplish humanization through its posing for the child such questions as, Who am I? Why am I as I am? What is my world? Books will present these questions to a child regardless of his age, ability level, or interests.

Second, one of the major goals of education in the open classroom is to emphasize to children the uniqueness of people. Thus, the goal of individualization can be accomplished by,

> making it possible for students to read and use during the course of their learning experiences extensive variety and innumerable literary selections that are addressed to a select few readers.[25]

Thus, the satisfaction of individual interests is one attribute which books contribute to the open classroom.

Third, books contribute to personalization because they lend themselves to whatever purpose the child has chosen. Children can thumb through the *Guinness Book of World Records* in search of a wealth of information. A child can become engrossed in Zim's *First Book of Snakes* in order to extend his understanding of just how snakes swallow without chewing. Finally, he can become lost in Don Freeman's *Norman the Doorman* because he just wants a "good story." Regardless of how children use books, it is important that they use them to fit their own purposes.

Last, books can become springboards for creative writing by children.

> We use the opportunity to read extracts in class not with the intention of encouraging children to write a book of a book, but to concentrate on a particular description of mood, atmosphere or situation. It is not a question of attempting another

> *Borrowers*, but of sensitizing ourselves to, say, the description of a room as a way of arousing an interest in our own room, and illuminating and extending a child's personal experience.[26]

Before leaving the subject of books, it should be said that one of the major tasks of the media specialist is the selection of appropriate children's books. A fact often overlooked is that the affective qualities of a book (illustrations, size, shape, and color) are often as important as content.

> The quality of content, language, illustration, and production is of great importance and should not be entirely sacrificed to quantity; there should be some books that the children get sheer pleasure in handling, whether they can read them or not. I have seen children stroke the photograph of an animal as though it were real.[27]

Conclusion

There is nothing quite so powerful as an idea whose time has come.

- - - Victor Hugo

In conclusion, I once called the advent of the open classroom in British primary education the silent revolution. Indeed, it was a revolution because it challenged many long-established beliefs and traditions, and it was silent because it began on a local level and quietly spread. One of our tasks for the 1970's should be to create our own species of the silent revolution by attempting to implement the open classroom here without overlooking or diluting its distinctive character. When we do, media specialists will play an important role in sustaining an idea whose time has come.

Notes

1 Charles Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom: the Remaking of American Education* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 265.

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3 Joseph Featherstone, "Teaching Children to Think," *New Republic*, 9 September 1967, p. 9.

4 Bernard Spodex, "Alternatives to Traditional Education," *Peabody Journal of Education*, January 1971, p. 142.

5 Ann Cook and Herbert Mack, "The British Primary Schools," *Educational Digest*, February 1970, p. 37.

6 Vincent R. Rogers, ed., *Teaching in the British Primary School* (London: Collier-Macmillan, Ltd., 1970).

7 Vincent R. Rogers, "Open Schools on the British Model," *Educational Leadership*, February 1972, p. 401.

8 This is also true for secondary school children who need to discover their identity through varied experience. See Erik H. Erikson, *Identity Youth and Crisis* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1968).

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11 Alan Gartner, Mary Kohler, and Frank Riessman, *Children Teach Children, Learning by Teaching* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971).

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18 Mark Weber, "Piecemeal Revolution: Controlled Freedom in the British Open Classroom," *School Library Journal*, November 1972, p. 41.

19 John Holt, *How Children Fail* (New York: Pitman, 1964), p. 180.

20 Mary Brown and Norman Precious, *The Integrated Day in the Primary School* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1968), p. 40.

21 Lorraine Morgan, "The Role of the Teacher in the Informal Classroom," *Elementary English*, March 1973, p. 403.

22 Ruth Ann Davies, *The School Library: A Force for Excellence* (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1969), p. 17.

23 Lillian Weber, *The English Infant School and Informal Education* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), p. 176.

24 Patricia Cianciolo, "The Role of Children's Books in the Open School," *Elementary English*, March 1973, pp. 409–416.

25 Ibid., p. 410.

26 Leonard Marsh, *Alongside the Child: Experiences in the English Primary School* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), p. 98.

27 Vincent R. Rogers, *Teaching in the British Primary School* (London: Collier-Macmillan Ltd., 1970), p. 13.

The Media Specialist and Student Involvement with Media

Michael W. Boylan

Perhaps one of the most important features of the open school is that it is an enjoyable place, enjoyable for both teachers and students. The students love their school! This does not just happen, however. It is the result of a working philosophy of education that acknowledges personal strengths and differences, motivation and performance, attitudes and accomplishments, experiences and backgrounds. It is evidence that the school is a place of teaching and learning, not teachers and students.

Being a media specialist in an open school is both a delight and a challenge. It places the individual in the position of both the teacher and the learner. The media specialist must possess a thorough understanding of the school program, recognizing both teaching and learning viewpoints, and participate in such a way as to make objectives of both attainable. He must know what is being taught in the classroom and participate with teaching teams, curriculum committees, and individual subject area teachers in planning the methodology and direction for the academic program. In this way the media specialist acquires insight into the academic program to aid in the selection, acquisition, application, and use of materials in the collection. The availability and scope of the collection can be discussed during the planning sessions and the media specialist can truly function as a resource person, suggesting alternatives, additional materials, outside sources, and schedule adjustments directed toward the major teaching objectives. This involvement extends beyond the media center and into the classrooms and hallways. With this advance knowledge of assignments and classroom objectives the media specialist can provide materials and alternatives for the student. The learner is not confronted with work that cannot be undertaken in the media center due to

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insufficient materials or a lack of motivation. The media specialist becomes a valuable resource person for the learner.

Individualization

From his knowledge of the students and of the materials in the collection, the media specialist can act as the student's advocate during faculty planning sessions. He can also use his understanding of educational objectives and methodology to aid the learner in his assignments and related studies. This writer's participation on team teaching units, and contact with teachers in various grade levels and subject areas, enable him to adjust assignments in relation to the learner's abilities, performance, interests, and motivation so that almost all students left the center with materials. This individualization of subject area activities resulted in each learner meeting the major objective (s) without being forced into a standardized read-and-write framework for his homework and written projects.

How does all of this come about? It begins with the school philosophy and extends through the personal involvement of the media specialists with teachers and learners. It is the individualization of education in its broadest terms.[1] Just as "every teacher becomes a teacher of reading" so does the media specialist become a teacher of his clients in the media center; one who is equipped with an understanding of objective, and a skill in human interaction and is given or takes the opportunity to enhance, facilitate, and optimize learning situations.

Importance of Involvement with Students

The media specialist *can get to know* his students, his learners. This means taking a personal interest and working with the learner on his assignments. Each year when the school photographer came to the Kent State University School the media specialists requested a complete set of student pictures which were identified and placed in the media center office so that the staff could systematically learn the students names. It was then an easy task to begin to relate accomplishments, personalities, interests, and needs to names and faces. Getting to know the students also involves close contact with the school counselors to determine those in need of extra assistance, knowing who was not performing in the classroom, identifying academic weak-

nesses, and prescribing solutions for improvement. Since the media specialist does not usually participate in the formal evaluation procedure he is a person the learner can trust for acceptance, understanding, and assistance.

This degree of involvement with students and curricula places heavy demands on the media specialist. It calls for the qualities of personal and professional interaction in the administration and operation of the media program. No longer does he have time for non-professional, clerical jobs, for the media center has become a vital, integrated part of the school in terms of people and learning. This implies that supportive staff will handle circulation, technical processing, and routine operations with the professional maintaining the position of supervisor of policies, guiding the operation of the media center. The job description places priorities on the involvement with the curriculum and the teaching and learning processes and persons.

Helping Students Develop Media Projects

The development of individualized learning experiences brings forth the need for some guidelines for promoting student media projects. Instead of a written report the learner might submit a film or slide sequence, a collage or sculpture, a tape recording or dramatic reading, a skit, a dance, a musical composition, or a poem. The freedom of expression that accompanies student media projects permits the learner to acquire additional subject competency, and learn and perfect new and exciting methods of communication. The teacher can transform the evaluation into an exchange of ideas and insights. An assignment becomes a media presentation, and its communication encompasses subject matter, but more importantly, the learner's viewpoints and feelings.

The following guidelines are the result of the writer's experiences in working with students in both an open-type school (Kent State University School),* and in a large public high school (Lancaster High School). In promoting student media projects it is necessary for the media specialist and classroom teacher to jointly assist the student and help him to:

a Select and isolate the project. Assist the learner in selecting a topic then isolate a subject within that topic. This is the most important phase of the project as it will identify the content and

*At the University School at Kent State University, Mr. Boylan worked with children from age 3 in the nursery school to 18 in the high school

eliminate non-essential research. Instead of "Nineteenth Century American Painters" the student works on "Currier and Ives as Portrayers of Nineteenth Century Americana."

b Conceptualize the project. The learner must determine what his completed project will be in size, format, and presentation. Will it be a written report, film, audio tape? Will it be factual, analytical, comparative, interpretative?

c Establish goals and methodology. What will the project reveal? How is this to be accomplished? What is the student going to say? What resources are needed? How and where is this information available? Is there enough time? What difficulties are foreseen? The media specialist and teacher must then see that the student gets his work underway. At what time does this project become binding and major changes become unacceptable?

d Foster creativity. From his knowledge of the individual the media specialist draws upon those interests and talents to produce that spark which will set the student upon his road to success. Having the OK that guarantees his assignment, the student is then given assistance in the pursuit of his ideas. Expect some disappointments, but also surprises!

e Provide equipment, facilities, and materials. Today's students have access to almost limitless equipment and facilities. Under even limited circumstances the student can produce startling results. Let the student know early what the school can offer in materials, equipment, and facilities. Help him beg or borrow the hardware; direct him in securing the software for his research.

f Anticipate difficulties. Again, from your knowledge of students you can expect delays, omissions, poor results, and uneven efforts in team projects. Make early adjustments where and when necessary and apply pressure if needed.

g Know when to refrain. Remember, this is not a student project if you do his work for him. Offer assistance but don't do the work! You can instruct in the use of the camera but the student must expose the film. Show and teach in production, for this one-to-one instruction yields the highest results. Build from errors and mistakes. Keep in mind that the learner is responsible to the classroom teacher and not the media specialists.

h Record the investment. Provide an opportunity for the recording of time and expenses invested in the project. Develop a means of evaluation for the project that will incorporate the learning of techniques and peripheral information not evident from the presentation. The following form is suggestive of the kind of information to obtain.

Student Media Production Record

..... Name grade/class

..... Teacher's name course name

..... Project title/subject

Equipment used

.....16mm/8mm camera
.....35mm camera
.....Visualmaker kit
.....Tape recorder
.....Record player
.....Thermal trans.
.....Dry mount press
.....Opaque projector
.....Overhead projector
.....Video recorder

Production record

Materials cost .....
Hours expended .....

Film used ..... type .....
Items produced ..... #
Presentation
date: .....
place: .....
Equipment needed.....
.....
.....

Comments on production.

.....
.....
.....
.....

[Students express their comments on their work]

Who assisted you on this project?

.....
.....

Was this project worthwhile? Would you do this type of project again?

.....
.....
.....

Sources of information used:

.....
.....

[What libraries or media centers]

i Evaluate against objectives. Provide consideration for the student's originality and aptness of thought in the presentation but also keep in mind that the project was (probably) assigned. Help the teacher develop an evaluation that coordinates the teacher's objectives with the student's project goals. The teacher's, however, is the final judgment of the project.

j Publicize the presentations. On project day arrange for a large area to display and present them. Be able to accomodate all forms of presentations with sufficient audiovisual equipment on hand. Project day should be more than just a time to turn in homework.

k Preserve projects for future use. Whenever there are exceptional products, have the projects become a part of the media center collection. Buy or have student films and slides copied. Photograph mobiles, posters, charts, collages, and paintings. Don't let these efforts end up in a wastebasket. Use these to inspire other students. Likewise, try to photograph students working on their projects.

l Commend the producer. Much of the learning in schools is motivated for its future reward. A verbal "that's a nice project" is soon forgotten. Make an attempt to send a written note of appreciation and praise to the student and his parents with a copy for the student's recordfolder. Suggest further activities and projects. Let the student know that you realize his investment and expression of creativity.

The day of presentation is not the end of a media project. The student should be encouraged to perfect his work and re-submit it in regional and national competition. Two junior students at Kent State University School produced a three minute regular-8mm film that was shown to the school, a state convention, and later entered into a national filmmaking contest. Their film, a kinestasis depiction of the Viet Nam War and its loss of American lives, was a springboard for several other students in the school.* Healthy competition can result from the efforts of students who were inspired by another student's media presentation.

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*Their film, "Thirty Thousand Lives in Three Minutes," is described in the section entitled *Examples of Student Media Projects*.

Examples of Students Media Projects

Of the many student projects of recent years the writer recalls the following as examples of meticulous workmanship, expressive creativity and of high quality. The projects were submitted mostly as assignments but some were undertaken for personal interest. The students represented various grade levels in the Kent State University School and Lancaster High School. These projects were apart from those projects undertaken in art, visual communication and literary classes.

Films

Chris Ruffner and Doug McCormick (juniors, KSUS) Title: "Thirty Thousand Lives in Three Minutes." A kinestasis film taken from national magazines and depicting the Viet Namese War. Based on Charles Braverman's classic, *American History in Three Minutes*, Chris R's film was immediately popular and set the tone for numerous other applications of this technique by school photographers. It was combined with a synchronized tape soundtrack of appropriate popular music.

Marvin England (junior, LHS) Title: "Gold Rush." This film was a project for American History class and was a documentary based on the California Gold Rush. Marvin tastefully filmed his version of the gold discovery and the subsequent changes that this brought to the expanding nation. The 200' super8mm film was combined with a stereo soundtrack of appropriate music, and the producer gave an oral narration during projection.

Jim Brown et.al. (7th grade, KSUS) Title: "A Day in the Life of Mr. Boylan." Jim and his associates stopped in the media center one day to ask for my assistance in a film project. They returned later with a camera, clipboard, and one 100Watt bulb and cord. The three boys took turns at all phases of their filmmaking and their early model wind-up Bell & Howell camera captured a most humorous spoof of the media specialist s day. By rapid single-framing, careful angle location, and planned sequences the boys reproduced the old time action as the subject shelved books, collected fines, typed and filed cards, and performed other library operations. Their 50 feet of film was, for them, a trememdously successful learning situation.

Mark Suffron (senior, KSUS) Title: "American Colors." An icono-

graphic film taken of an American flag being painted on a blue field. The colors were added a few brush strokes at a time followed by 8 frames of film exposure. Superimposed around the completed flag were the words, ". . . all men are created equal . . . but some men are more equal than others . . ." The white of the stars and strips continued to expand until the entire flag was a white field. The filming and painting took Mark nearly eight hours and his work was consumed in the process of painting. His message was staccato and the visual effect heightened by the accompanying soundtrack of well-selected patriotic and contemporary music. This was submitted to the American Studies Team.

Tom Michaels and Bob Coke (seniors, KSUS) Subject: *Walden Pond* by Thoreau. With Tom as the cameraman and Bob as the noted American author, the outdoor footage of the woods and pond scenes beautifully parelleled Thoreau's literary message.

Mark Gallagher (junior, KSUS) Subject: Conditions in two neighborhoods. Mark shot 200 feet of film to illustrate the vast differences of two communities in the Akron, Ohio area. By using long zoom shots to begin a scene and then pulling back to enlarge the view, the relationship of affluence and need were expressed. Again, presented for American Studies, the film was unique in that the wealthy neighborhood was filmed in color and the ghetto filmed in black and white.

Slides

David White and Jan Scott (seniors, KSUS) Subject: the Beatles. David and Jan produced 72 color slides with a stereo tape soundtrack based on the biographies of the Beatles and their decade of public life. The program was of flawless professional quality with impressive selection of pictures and commentary and precise timing of their soundtrack. Presented to their Senior Studies class.

Carl Bibbee (freshman, LHS) Title: "Science Fact or Science Fiction." Carl used the Kodak Visualmaker to produce 20 slides from books and film catalogs for his English class, Science Fiction. His program was shown during a parent conference evening. Carl provided an oral narration for his program.

Vocational Home Economics (junior program, LHS) Title: "Can You Accept a Challenge?" A recruitment program on slides with a

cassette soundtrack, this project was the result of a class of girls and their teacher working with the media specialist. The class developed the story and set up the photographing schedule. The script and soundtrack were recorded at the school. The slide presentation shows the three programs of the vocational curriculum—health, food, and child study. It was being used with prospective students. The premier showing was held during an evening parent meeting and additional posters and a hand-out booklet describing the course were prepared.

Students in American Dream Literature (freshman LHS) Subject the Okies of the 1920's and 1930's. The students selected 20 pictures from which slides were made of the conditions and people known as Okies to use, with a class reading, for their study of *The Grapes of Wrath*. The pictures were taken from old magazines, illustrated song books and history books.

Tom Blosser and Eric Wonderly (sophomores, KSUS) Subject: Black poetry. Tom and Eric produced a series of 60+ slides to accompany Black poems. The poems were produced on transparencies and the slides visually supported the poetic text. Their presentation was a dual screen projection, silent. The audience reaction was that of awe and the students were moved by their carefully selected visuals. The program was about 15 minutes in length; presented for World Studies Literature.

American Studies Team (history, literature, music, art teachers, librarian, graduate assistant, television program producer KSUS) Subject: American youth. The American Studies Team produced a slide program to introduce a unit on the position of American youth. The program was a historical commentary with taped soundtrack that showed the various social and economic categories that influenced youth from 1600 to 1930. The program was open-ended and became a starting point for the class study of the position of youth since 1930. Groups then developed projects showing their experiences as young adults in the '60's and '70's.

Dance

Twyla Wallace (junior, KSUS) Subject: Women's Lib. Twyla and two friends presented an interpretative modern dance of women's rights through consecutive periods of American history for their American Studies class.

Suzanne Reid (senior, KSUS) Subject: African slave trade. Suzanne presented a visually supported interpretative dance before a scrim on which were being projected (from the rear) various illustrations showing the Negro slaves being taken from Africa to the New World. This was performed during an American Studies unit on Negro Experiences in the Making of America.

Other

Students often take field trips. At University School the students in the upper grades take an annual tour to a major cultural or historical area such as Cleveland University Circle, Greenfield Village, Air Force Museum in Dayton. Elementary students take tours to fire departments, police stations, bakeries, water plants, and other community agencies. When these students took a tour, the media specialists were always ready to give cassette recorders and Instamatic cameras to them to record the day. The students in the Middle School went on a week's camping experience during the spring. For this the library sent a wide selection of books for nature study and camping.

The above examples of student projects are indicative of the varied interests, excellent talents, and sophisticated insights of today's students. That such projects are being undertaken is evidence that the curriculum and operation of today's schools have changed. These students have been the first generation to be raised in a multi-media society and it is the only natural for them to apply the multi-media approach in their school communications. The role of the media specialist is thus geared to these students in much the same way as the former role of school librarian was geared to the demands of the students of only a few years past.

Implications for the media program

What are the implications for the media program of extensive student involvement? The program should promote and encourage student media productions by offering facilities, equipment, materials, and the technical and personal assistance of a media specialist who is knowledgeable in matters of classroom operations, student backgrounds, and total media philosophy. The media program should facilitate the professional growth of the faculty through a concerted effort to optimize the teacher-learner relationship. The media specialist should apply production

methods toward strengthening the curriculum and instructional program. He should capitalize on the benefits resulting from the involvement of teachers and learners. For the media specialist there is a demand for supportive assistance in the daily operation of the media center and a commitment from the school administration to adequately provide for total participation through financial and other means of support.

While few schools actually provide this comprehensive program for student production, each media center should develop a long-range plan for acquiring the facilities needed to support such a philosophy. Careful selection and a sequential purchase plan will result in a quality program within a few years. The instructional needs of the faculty are really not much different from the production needs of the student body. The availability of equipment in the media center, supervision of its operation, and benefits from the individualized media program are all elements that can be handled within the objectives and operations of the open school.

The humanization of education achieved through this individualization of instruction and expression can be the result of the media specialist's involvement with students and teachers. Objectives realistically developed and implemented in the school and media program are guarantees that the school process will be enjoyable and that the teachers and students will both really be teachers and learners. The guidelines presented in this article have been followed by the writer in numerous situations in both open and traditional type schools with positive results.

Notes

1 Michael Boylan, "The University School American Studies Experience. Three Views by Teaching Team Members, Involving Library Resources in America Studies," *Ideas Educational*, Spring 1970, pp. 13-15.

Media Specialists Work With Teachers

Nancy B. Pillon

The concept of the open school is one that has attracted much attention in the past decade. The education theory basic to open schools includes the concept that learning cannot be imposed by either teachers or well organized materials. Instead, an environment must be provided which will allow the learner to grow naturally into a person who is curious, who can reason effectively, and who has acquired processes for learning rather than a storehouse of remembered facts. In a rapidly expanding technology, specialized skills become obsolete quickly. Students need flexibility, and the ability to deal with change, and to make rapid adjustments.[1]

In considering successful ways that media specialists have found to work with teachers in the open school, we should begin by appraising the new role of materials in a learner-centered open environment.

Open-concept education is based on individual and small group interaction with resources, both human (teachers, other students, the community) and material. The pupil is no longer dependent on the textbook and the teacher as prime sources for the information he needs. Instead the child enters into a dialogue with materials.[2] He does not wait passively for something to happen but rather reaches out, probes for possibilities, takes meanings.[3] A greater part of the teacher's time is therefore spent selecting and organizing materials, observing and assessing children-interaction with these materials, and planning the next encounter between the child, the materials, and the teacher.[4]

Teachers must work very closely with each other and with the

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media specialist to optimize materials use. A nongraded team-teaching program provides opportunities for each student to develop skills at his own rate. A team of teachers including the media specialist provides an opportunity to strengthen and enhance the students' learning experiences.

Teaming With Teachers

The teacher and media specialist form a team to teach the use of materials and the skills pertinent to the completion of learning tasks. This is effective teaching which enables the students to see the media center in relation to their present needs. The media specialist may spend as much time outside the center as he does within it. At times the media specialist will observe the teachers and students, evaluating the ways materials are used. At other times he will actively team with the teacher to completely integrate his talents and expertise with that of the teacher.

The main thrust of the media specialist's talents and time is work with students and teachers on a direct personal basis to improve the learning climate. The competencies of all will improve with interaction.

Media center specialists need to know what is happening in classrooms. Discussions between the teachers and media specialists of objectives and methods are fruitful. Media specialists should cooperate with teachers in actual instruction, setting up collections, and guiding utilization. When all of the materials available in the collection for a unit have been gathered, the media center specialist should assist the teachers to design and produce additional materials. In order to do this the media specialist needs an understanding of learning theory, curriculum design, and evaluative techniques.

Community Resources

The media specialist utilizes media that are available in the school and outside the school. Many open schools make extensive use of community resources including public libraries, social agencies, and individuals. Children and adolescents find themselves continuously bombarded by a deluge of information. Barriers are imposed by the complexity of society which makes direct involvement with learning difficult.[5] Thus we find students protesting the inhumanity and irrelevance of their educational

experiences.[6] Utilization of the community as a resource can help fill this gap.[7]

Prostano and Prostano expressed very well how communications could be improved by saying, "If the media specialist has developed the means of successfully working with teachers on a continuing basis—through membership on the principal's advisory committee, through the L.M.C. committee of teachers, through the media selection committee structure and through the reading guidance structure—then dealing with teachers is facilitated."[8] (L.M.C. refers to learning materials center.)

Human Relations

The nature of the open school requires that the media specialist concentrate on human relations. A freer relationship exists between media specialists, teachers, and students in the open school. The environment of mutual trust and respect that is found in open schools provides for optimum learning. Furthermore it permits students and teachers to be themselves.

Robert M. Hutchins believes that the proponents of the open school want the school to have an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness. He said, "They want children treated as human beings. They correctly believe that there are many ways to learning, and that those which are pleasanter may also be more productive."[9]

Interviews With Open School Personnel

In order to learn more about the services in the open school media center, this investigator visited several open schools and interviewed school personnel in an elementary school which was in its first year of operation and a middle school which was in its third year of operation. Portions of the interviews are presented in an attempt to compare the reactions from the two schools toward the media center.*

When the investigator asked about the advantages of the open school, the principal of the elementary school replied, "Pods feed into the media center, which makes it accessible and gives a

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*Quotations in this section, unless otherwise indicated were taken directly from the *Interview Form* used by the author with school personnel. The

feeling that it is the focal point of the school. Children are more involved in the use of the media center. . .The media specialist must keep in constant touch with the staff."

When the media specialist was asked about the advantages of the open school, she replied, "The students can come any time. There is room for two or three classes. Or they can come alone or in small groups. They don't have to wait for the next library class to come. Kids don't feel that a visit to the media center is an interruption, and they enjoy the open school so much that they don't want to miss a day of school."

Summarizing the advantages of the open school and the way in which the media center of an open school is utilized, a teacher responded, "Since the media center is in the center of the building, the children see it more often. They pass through on their way to lunch or to the office, and they feel more at ease in going. The materials are more easily seen. They (students) are no longer scheduled to go to the media center, but they can go when their interest is greatest. One of my students said that she wanted to go right then because she saw a book that she wanted. I personally like it better."

Some of the comments of a third grade teacher are as follows, "The students can come for reports, for pleasure, or for viewing and listening at the time that they are the most interested in coming. I have more contact with the media specialist in receiving help than I would in a traditional school. The unscheduled use of the media center is a strong point."

A teacher of the upper levels seemed enthusiastic about the improved services of the media center when she said, "The additional services of the media center are much more than I anticipated. There is no question about the fact that the students have benefited in terms of working more independently. The media specialist brings to our attention appropriate materials and asks for suggestions in selecting new materials. Furthermore she has been helpful in teaching library skills. It is great that students can go to the media center when they really want to go."

A teacher of the youngest children replied to my interview questions by saying, "The media center is centrally located, which is an advantage for children and teachers. I think the children feel freer to use it, and I think there is something special about

the informality. This fact makes the children relax and enjoy it more. We feel closer to the media specialist, because we get a chance to talk to her at various times, where as if the media center was isolated we wouldn't have as many opportunities. I think the parents are much more familiar with the open media center than they were with a traditional library, because they have to pass through the media center for numerous reasons. Of course, we have more materials here than I ever dreamed we would have in the elementary library. I feel free to give my suggestions to the media specialist, because she makes every effort to order the things we are interested in. Usually, when we get new materials, the media specialist makes sure we see them or know they are here. At the beginning of the year we had in-service training and learned how to use many new kinds of equipment. The children use the media center a lot more by being able to visit it when they want to find something. I would be a little reluctant to send my age group if it were way down at the end of the hall or upstairs."

A parent, serving as a para-professional in the media center, used personal experience to show the value of the open school and media center. She observed, "Students are learning to use the media center, and they are doing more recreational reading. In browsing they find books on subjects they are discussing in their classes. Teachers enjoy having a say in what is purchased. I had a terrible time getting my daughter in the fourth grade to read until she came to this school, but now she is reading much more pertaining to school subjects and for recreation as well. By continually passing through the library the students see materials they want. The students are getting proficient in using the equipment themselves. Books are not enough now that they know the variety of other materials that are available."

One of the teachers in the elementary school was especially impressed by the services to children, and she commented, "Basically the children can come at any time, and more children can be accommodated. The atmosphere is more relaxed and the students like the media center more. The ability for students to work on their own has increased, since they are taught to look for themselves. This experience gives them confidence. When we need help with library skills, we can arrange it with the media specialist. The media center is opening a whole new world to the children."

Many similarities were observed in the enthusiasm shown toward

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the media center in both schools. It seemed that the media specialist in the middle school had found more time to become involved in curriculum planning. But then, her program is in its third year. She seemed very adept at communication and motivation.

When asked if she ever had problems with supervising so many students, and whether teachers ever failed to come with their classes, the head of the media center at the middle school replied, "It just isn't done. This has never come up. The teachers always come and stay with their classes. We don't want a hush-hush atmosphere. There is a lot of learning going on and kids like to be here. I tell the teachers personally about new materials, and all of them have a map of this area. The place is almost jumping in the morning because there are so many students in here."

In the middle school each pod has a curriculum coordinator. One of the curriculum coordinators indicated the value of the media center to the instructional program by pointing out that the students like the relaxed atmosphere, the freedom, the friendliness, and the warmth. She said, "The media center is not closed in." She was generally enthusiastic about the integration of the media services with the overall curricular program of the school.

In response to my questions about services, a teacher who was busy making plans for team teaching replied, "I cannot say enough about the length to which the media specialists will go beyond the call of duty. I have had a wonderful response to anything I have requested, even if it is on the spur of the moment. When we turn in a request for materials, it is filled almost immediately. There is nothing that the media specialists are failing to do. The media specialists have done a lot to acquaint the students with the center, and there is no problem in students going there without advanced scheduling. We coordinate all types of media because this gives the kids the idea that we can learn through many devices."

The other member of the team said, "The media specialists will do everything they can. They will organize materials for you or they are willing to go to your room and be a resource person. At teachers' meetings, the media specialists tell about new things in the media center. I don't know how it could be used more, and by the middle of the year most students are ready to work on their own, but they are never afraid to ask."

One teacher seemed impressed by the media center's great accessibility when she responded: "As a teacher I check on little things and pick up material whenever I pass through. It is favorable to students who have the ability to work independently. The atmosphere is friendly for all and not forbidding as it was in my school library. The physical plan and people make it accessible."

The guidance counselor said, "The open plan breaks down walls that have surrounded bookshelves for so many years. This is needed in this day and age when too many people are depending on television for their information. The open school does it as well as anything. It gives students opportunities to work independently that they wouldn't have otherwise. There may be better media specialists, but I haven't run across them yet."

The attitude of the faculty and administrators toward the media center in the open concept school as well as in the traditional school is the key to success of its program. A brochure from one of the schools visited indicated the attitude often taken in open concept schools toward the media center:

> The heart of the new building is an instructional materials center which is situated so that students naturally pass through it many times a day, entering, leaving or moving around the school. Such constant contact is designed to create interest and invites the student to avail himself of readily accessible books, magazines, audiovisual and electronic resources.[1]

Guidelines For Operating Media Services To Teachers

Based on visits to open schools the following guidelines are suggested for making the media center more viable to the needs of the teachers. The media specialist should realize that times have changed and that teachers and students have changed also. Therefore, the media specialist must adjust to what is happening in education. This involves accommodating the procedures of the media center to the needs of the teachers.

The media center specialist needs to participate actively in faculty and team meetings by showing the teachers and administrators the materials and services that the media center has to offer. This may be done formally or informally. It will often be necessary for the media specialist to demonstrate his worth

before he will be fully accepted as a full colleague. At times the facilities of the center may be utilized by teams of teachers for planning sessions and for faculty meetings if they do not interfere with services to students.

The media specialist must not always be cast in the role of *ex post facto* reactor to innovation but rather must anticipate the function and contribution of the media program to the total school program, present and anticipated. In order to do this it is necessary for the media specialist to be a part of the administrative team.

Scan journals such as *Learning: The Magazine for Creative Teaching, The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Educational Leadership,* and *The National Elementary Principal* as well as subject journals. When implications for media services are seen in these journals he calls the attention of the administrator to these. (This also demonstrates the media specialist's interest in the teachers' or administrator's specialty.—*Editor)*

The media specialist should familiarize himself with the total curriculum and know the materials the teachers are covering now and what they are planning to do tomorrow. In the future take time to visit classrooms in order to talk and listen to the teachers in their rooms. Volunteer to share responsibilities in particular classes, especially those related to the use of the library. Attend team meetings, contribute the unique preparation which the media specialist has on materials, their utilization, and the ways students interact with them.

The media specialist should encourage teachers to participate in the selection of materials. Ordering procedures should be as simple as possible. The media specialist must be able to react to demands for new materials immediately. At times this will mean sacrificing discounts obtainable from jobbers and using the local drugstore, bookstore or paperback dealer.

As soon as materials arrive in the media center they should be taken to the teachers who recommended them. Teachers should be kept informed of additional materials that have arrived through lists of new acquisitions. Academic librarians have been using "pathfinders," annotated lists of materials on special topics to keep their clients up to date.[1] It is important for teachers to be

allowed to keep materials as long as they need them. The media specialist should be willing to go outside the collection to procure resources and be responsible for getting needed materials from not only other libraries but also other sources.

Faculty members are equals. The media specialist should not make the mistake of sending directions to teachers or of expecting teachers to do the media specialist's work. Most teachers will be "turned off" if the media specialist asks them to take care of the overdue notices during home room period or during class.

It is important for the media specialist to know the teachers personally. He should know their interests, hopes, and aspirations. This implies discussing not only library services but additional topics as well. Contacts within and outside the school will facilitate communication.

The media specialist should be friendly, dependable, accessible, and dynamic. The media specialist cannot wait for teachers to come to him and should get out and work with the faculty members. That approach will give teachers a more positive attitude toward the media center and its program.

The open school demands cooperation of media specialists with teachers if a successful program is to result. Media specialists who combine imagination with the use of current materials and equipment, who can listen to teachers and students, who can spark the initiative and creativity of students and then wait for their productivity will have media centers that are "learning centers."

Paul Goodman in advocating the discovery approach said, "Perhaps the chief advantage of incidental educating rather than schooling is that the young can then carry on their movement grounded in experience and competence."[1] An "open" media center in an open concept school can promote and enhance this process.

Appendix

Interview Questions

1 What grade or level do you teach?

2 What are some advantages that the media center of the open school has over the traditional library?

3 Give examples of how helpful the media center specialist has been in:

- **a** Introducing you to new materials.
- **b** Providing you with new materials.
- **c** Assisting with the designing of instructional experiences or programming for individual students in your class.
- **d** In-service programs for acquainting the faculty with recent educational developments and the effective use of equipment and media.
- **e** Bringing about innovations in the curriculum in the classroom.

4 How effective are each of the following phases of media center services in relation to your work in the classroom?

- **a** Unscheduled use of the media center.
- **b** Participation in evaluation, selection and ordering of materials.
- **c** The media specialist acting as resource person in the classroom when requested.
- **d** The media specialist serving on teaching teams.

5 Are there any additional services which you think the media center should provide for teachers?

6 What is the effect of improved accessibility of the media center for student use?

7 How much do you think the media center has increased the student's ability to work independently?

8 Do you think the media center is effective in leading students to self discovery?

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Notes

1 Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (New York, Random House, Inc., 1970).

2 Tony Kallet, "Some Thoughts on Children and Materials," *Mathematics Teaching*, Autumn 1967, p. 38.

3 Ibid., p. 39.

4 David Hawkins, "I-Thou-It," *Mathematics Teaching*, Spring 1969, pp. 22-26.

5 James S. Coleman, "The Children Have Outgrown the Schools," *Psychology Today*, February 1972, pp. 72-75.

6 John Birmingham, *Our Time Is Now: Notes From the High School Underground* (New York, Praeger Publications, 1970).

7 Raymond W. Barber, "The Open Media Center" (Unpublished, Tallahassee, Florida, Department of Educational Administration, Florida State Univ., 1972).

8 Emanuel T. Prostano and Joyce S. Prostano, *The School Library Media Center* (Littleton, Colo., Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1971), p. 242.

9 Robert M. Hutchins, "The Schools Must Stay," *The Center Magazine*, Vol. 6, January-February, 1973, p. 12-23.

10 Metropolitan School District of Perry Township, *Meridian Middle School* (Indianapolis, The Township, [1970]). For copies write to: Mr. Morris Beck, Principal, Meridian Middle School, 5040 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis, Ind.

11 Charles S. Stephens, Marie P. Canfield, and Jeffrey J. Gardner, "Library Pathfinders: A New Possibility for Cooperative Reference Service," *College and Research Libraries*, January 1973, pp. 40-46.

12 Paul Goodman, "The Present Movement in Education," *New York Review of Books*, Vol. 12, April 1969, pp. 14-21, 24.

Environmental Considerations For Open-Space Schools

Introduction

Thomas L. Hart

Educators have become disenchanted with past pedagogical restraints imposed by restrictive curricula and buildings. Most of the older and larger school districts in the United States through the years have developed a hierarchy of system-wide curriculum supervisors, and numerous curriculum guides which were to be strictly adhered to by local school personnel. The facilities which were built to support these curricula reflected the rigid and hierarchical orientation of their planners. The buildings were designed with considerable thought and elaborate detail by supervisory and administrative personnel without regard for the teachers, students, and parents who would be using the facilities daily. To make changes in the utilization patterns of these extremely inflexible buildings is costly and in some cases impossible because of structural problems, i.e. location of plumbing, electrical wiring, and load-bearing walls.

Currently many school districts are relinquishing rigid curricular and supervisory controls and encouraging the people who are most directly involved in the teaching-learning process to provide considerable input in the planning and design of new facilities. "To help make decisions that will meet expected functions of the learning resource center, the principal and media specialist must consult with experts and users—salesmen, architects, parents, teachers, and others. The media specialist with the principal must make visitations to other learning resource centers. They must survey research and various articles in books, periodicals, and journals on learning resource centers."[1]

The new emphasis on flexible learning spaces has been brought

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about by: (1) curricula designed for the individual child; (2) "open" learning environments; and (3) breakthroughs in climate and acoustical control systems. As classes became larger because of the population explosion, traditional methods of instruction were not successful, and educators began the search for new solutions. Most of these projects revolved around the importance of the individual learner and the need for flexible open learning spaces, whether in newly built facilities or older remodeled buildings.

One form of open environment is the "open corridor" which has primarily been used in elementary schools. It was developed by Lillian Weber, a professor at the City College of New York, using the informal education program of the British primary schools as a model. "Informal, as I understand it, refers to the setting, the arrangements, the teacher-child, and child-child relationships that maintain, reatimulate if necessary, and extend what is considered to be the most intense form of learning, the already existing child's way of learning through play and through the experiences he seeks out for himself."[2] As students and teachers work together, using corridors for informal experimentation and participative activity, classrooms are used for individualized learning experiences through small groups. This program is thoroughly explained by Gertrude Herman who points out the importance of a media center to "open corridor" learning.[3]

The most obvious reasons for the current emphasis on open space schools come from the developments in construction methods which provide ready access to climate and acoustical control systems. Scientific studies concerning the effect of thermal environment upon learning have revealed that maintaining the proper thermal environment in the school results in increased learning and work efficiency. Therefore, most new and remodeled school plans include quality climate control systems. Gilliland proposes that "the ear ranks second only to the eye as a corridor to the mind. Therefore, the acoustical environment of the school assumes critical importance in the learning situation. Unwanted sound must be held to a minimum, thus providing sound conditions for a good learning environment."[4]

Distracting sound may come from several sources, such as walking and other activities, user talk, and the frequent furniture movement associated with increased use of the center and changing learning patterns. The widespread use of carpeting for

floors and some walls assists the control of acoustics for new and remodeled school facilities. Carpeted areas are free from the usual normal sounds of walking or other activity. Furniture may be moved from one position to another with less disturbance, thereby lowering the sound level.

All of these concepts have brought about revolutionary changes in the processes of education, but these surface changes of space and learning procedures are meaningless unless one is committed to change in goals and understanding. The administrators, teachers, students, and parents involved must take a look and ask, "Are we satisfied with the way it is now?"

The next two articles will focus on new concepts for planning open space schools. First will be the theoretical concepts from an architect's viewpoint. The second is the practical considerations necessary to create an environment for optimum media center involvement from a media specialist's viewpoint.

Notes

1 Douglas E. Hensley, "A Systematic Approach to Learning Resource Center Design," *Educational Technology*, August 1972, pp. 63-64.

2 Lillian Weber, *The English Infant School and Informal Education* (New York, Prentice Hall, 1971), p. 11.

3 Gertrude Herman, "The Open Concept Schools and the Library," *Library Journal*, 15 September 1972, pp. 36-40.

4 John W. Gillespie, "How Environment Affects Learning," *American School and University*, December 1972, pp. 38-40.

An Architect's Theoretical Considerations

Winslow Elliott Wedin with Raymond W. Barber

The Environment in Open Education

The open media center is an environment. An environment for learning. An environment for use, change, and interaction with media. An environment of open, fluid, and flexible space, capable of accepting new media and changing concepts of curriculum. An environment as free of any fixed form, texture, and light as the landscape. An environment as a physical experience relating to human activity. "The open plan school concept is a physical expression of today's academic dedication to the individual student."[1]

What is this interior space which we hear called "the open plan" or, to borrow from another profession, "office landscape?". Basically we are defining an architectural volume substantially free of columns, load bearing walls, or other permanent constructs. It is a volume, not a space or an area, since a third dimension, height, is also considered. How has this open plan concept evolved? In the early 1950's office buildings were being designed with large, flexible loft spaces capable of being quickly changed to suit shifting tenant needs. The utilization of column free, large span space with thin curtain walls provided the developer with 85% to 89% net rentable space. In the 1960's the term "office landscape" came into use to define an office space created to encourage integration of management functions and communication among staff. More recently Robert Propst has expanded this concept by designing furniture and space modules to put this philosophy into practice.[2] We may expect to see during the present decade entire college campuses and schools under an inflatable skin providing acres of column free open space.

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How do the open school and office landscape differ? Actually very little. The objectives of flexibility, mobility, interaction, and team work are similar. The human needs to be met--unobstructed vision and hearing, privacy, and opportunity for interaction of varying size, are the same. The solutions of carpeting, massive mechanical services, storage, and hardware can be very similar. Using this similarity, we can utilize the background data available on office landscape to more effectively design new media center interior spaces.

Education, in responding to needs for quick, recurring change, may have much in common with the performing arts. If this is true, what can we learn from the theatre in planning school interiors? The stage is a highly flexible platform which utilizes the ceiling for storage of backgrounds (partitions), the wings for props, lighting to change scale, and below the stage full sets may be prepared, raised, and rotated for very brief utilization periods. With the advent of role playing, simulations and games, teaming, learning centers, and new media, the theatre's solutions become more relevant to our problems. It is possible that tantalizing prospects await us here, and should be explored by architects and educators together in planning open school environments.

Nature is constantly responding to change through evolution. Consistency is exceedingly unique. We find dynamic, imperfect change usually challenging. In education and learning, as in our lives, we exist with non-stable situations. There is an exponential rate of change in the organic nature of life which directly influences human institutions. The physical environment should accommodate to change easily, provide a place of security, and at the same time be beautiful. Real beauty can result from change. In viewing nature, one is assured of constant change. There is never a dull moment. Shouldn't our learning environments also respond to change to foster growth? The goal should not be to create change through control over the learning environment, but rather by anticipating trends, to accept change with ease and grace.

The Effect of Environment on Learning

How does the physical environment affect learning? The environment must allow the student access to materials, movement within and through materials, and interaction (through others) with materials. Not only must the environment facilitate the 'I-Thou-It' interaction between learners, teachers, and materials, but it must also encourage this interaction by not coming in between the learner, materials, and other learners.[3]

The environment should acknowledge the dichotomy which exists between group interaction and individual privacy. A continuum exists between these extremes. While large open areas allow for freedom of interaction, acoustical partitions, study carrels, and conference rooms may be necessary to achieve privacy or to tailor areas to fit group size and purpose. The resultant learning space should stimulate the learner, effectively separate various activities, increase mobility and time utilization, encourage interaction (where appropriate), and create a pleasant, beautiful, humane atmosphere. This learning space must be easily changed and receptive to multi-learning styles. To accomplish this, the media center must be related to the changing curriculum of the school and at the same time efficiently utilize time and space. The absence of permanent walls will facilitate communication and stimulate thought.

Educational Requirements of the Environment

The chief objective of the open media center is communication: communication between the media specialist and clients, both students and teachers, communication between and among students, and communication between the media and the users.[4]

Children learn in different ways. Therefore a varied and flexible environment will offer greater opportunities for learning arrangements. If children learn from both individual and group experiences then the environment should allow for each child to actively participate in his own learning. The environment should not get in the way.

One of the characteristics of open education is its reliance on "educational immedia."[5] Educational immedia is information which meets the immediate needs of the client in the media center. This immedia may come from resources within the center, resources from another center, the community resources file, or it may be re-packaged information produced by teachers or students.[6]

> In designing open space school buildings, it is ideal to allow space for facilities which enable children to participate in production of some of their own audiovisual media. If a teacher has the facilities available to let children do their own research on a subject, design and make the audiovisual aids such as slides, sound tapes, or video tapes, and then present the results of their efforts to their peers, self-

> motivation is much easier to encourage. Schools must also be designed to allow students to use educational mimedia with minimum supervision to obtain immediate maximum student-media interaction."

If children's interests are extremely varied and transitory then an environment which can change accordingly is a valuable asset. Present technology provides a mix of environmental options to make possible highly individualized learning situations in successively short periods of time. Use movable partitions to achieve shared environmental experiences; use acoustical and light control to create educational happenings; allow traffic flow options and aesthetic tactile experiences to provide a flexible environment for learning. Each student should be the center of his activities and be allowed to create individual space, including or excluding others as he needs.

The hardware and knowledge to implement this open concept is available; hollow floor systems providing power and communication conduits, free standing partitions and space defining screens, hollow, luminous ceilings containing heating, air conditioning, and lighting control can all join with long span engineering concepts to provide precisely the interior scape to fit the open school program.

Some Specific Problems

How can suitable *storage space* and *display area* both be provided if walls do not exist? All surfaces of visual screens, book racks, seating units, wet carrels, and structural elements must be equipped with surfaces to take displays. Carpet, cork, acoustical tile, or fabric can be employed. Metal panels can utilize magnetic fasteners, and large white surfaces, hung or free standing, may become projection screens. How mobile is a storage unit with 500 pounds of paper inside? Obviously, any storage which is so large that it becomes immobile defeats the stated flexibility objective. Therefore, child-scaled modular units which can be manipulated as required are appropriate.

How can *privacy* for individuals or small groups be provided? These same modular units can be designed to enclose and define space. Again, the hardware is generally available, from snap-together cardboard units to rolling bookshelves, to air-liftable cabinets, and to air inflatable modules.

While we all can appreciate the freedom of the vast open space it also brings with it the problem of acoustics. How can the acoustical control requirements be solved? One can obtain excellent open space acoustics by using various modes of control. These should only be installed after consultation with an acoustical expert.

1 Carpet.

2 An acoustically non-reflective ceiling.

3 Sound controlling screens to stop the sound from going directly from one work area to another.

4 A masking sound system of recorded music, technically designed to fill sound voids without increasing the overall ambient noise level, making it possible to hold personal conversations in a normal voice, without being overheard.

5 Book stacks and equipment used as sound absorbants.

Initial cost for flexibility is high, 50% more than for conventional fixed-purpose buildings. Therefore we must identify and discover the possible needs for change. How does one go about meeting these needs? What plans and strategies can be employed? Technology is one approach. Technology prevents the physical environment from delimiting the educational curriculum by imposing columns, partitions, unwanted lighting control, and hard surfaces. The activity spaces desired should dictate the physical configuration. We have the means to achieve these ends. However, it is not always necessary to build anew, which is expensive. There are alternate ways of providing this capability.

A Administrative changes for better and more efficient utilization of what exists.

B Renovation of existing space.

C Infill between, and additions to, existing buildings.

D New construction into expanded space.

Procedure for Planning a Successful Media Center

It is obvious that these are only some of the problems. How can we identify all possible problems and solutions? By working with an interdisciplinary team composed of architects, teachers, administrators, students, and media specialists, an environmental analysis can be prepared making a geographic inventory which displays all known information. Traffic flow, population, space requirements, location proximity requirements, curriculum needs, and an inventory of existing space are utilized to prepare visual overlays mapping out the possible planning strategies. Added to this should be a behavioral and social needs profile of the users. With these inputs priorities can be defined. This process forms the tactical study which determines the directions and planning needs of the open media center. The solution begins with the retaining of a planning and design team to coordinate all environmental criteria into an anticipatory plan. Whether it is a plan for a new structure or for renovations, education professionals, including the media specialist, should be involved in its evaluation. In general, the successful media center solution in an open-plan school has these attributes:

1 Grouped mechanical services allow vast flexibility through the use of hollow floors, with numerous power and communication conduits, zoned heating, ventilating and air cooling capabilities, and lighting control set up on a unit basis rather than area, pod, or strip.

2 Enclosure flexibility with few if any fixed walls. Flexible walls decrease future renovation costs by 95%.

3 Maximum user mobility and interaction with media.

4 Extensive display surfaces.

5 Provision for the effective production, storage, retrieval, and utilization of the required media.

6 A physical building which, through creative architecture, allows the environment to speak for itself by graphics, scale, light, or other means. In one solution, the media center is divided into the separate learning areas of listening, viewing, reading, and writing. Another solution provides furniture which is not uniform, but varied and capable of being altered

and rearranged to achieve new grouping. Media materials are kept within easy access and in large quantities. The media center will require few fixed service spaces. An additional requirement is the need for facilities used for promoting storage and preservation of student media projects.

The open media center is a vehicle for communication. The written word, the spoken word, the picture, music, and the physical environment all join to provide an opportunity for increased awareness. The architecture will enhance this in two major ways: 1) by not getting in the way of the other media and allowing them to function at their effective peak; and 2) by providing a positive statement of social emphasis, confidence, and stability, communicating a sense of being and individual self worth.

Notes

1 "The Open School Plan," *Report of the National Seminar Co-Sponsored by Educational Facilities Laboratories, Inc., and I. D. E. A.* (Melbourne, Florida: Institute for the Development of Educational Activities, Inc., 1970), p. 4.

2 Robert Propst, *The Office, A Facility Based on Change* (Elmhurst, Illinois: Business Press, 1968).

3 Robert Propst has transferred his concept of the "change based office" to the school in Robert Propst, *High School: The Process and the Place* (New York: Educational Facilities Laboratories, Inc., 1972.)

4 Ronald S. Barth, *Open Education and the American School* (New York: Agathon Press, 1972), p. 53.
David Hawkins, "I-Thou-It," *Mathematics Teaching*, Spring 1969, pp. 22-25.

5 Alan Gartner, Mary Kohler, and Frank Riessman, *Children Teach Children: Learning by Teaching* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1971).

6 "The Open School Plan," p. 12.

7 Sylvia Marantz, "Turned On, Not Punched Out: People in a Human Resource File," *School Libraries*, Winter 1969, pp. 49-53.

8 "The Open School Plan," p. 29.

The Media Specialist's View

Thomas L. Hart

83, 84/85

School library media centers have become the focal point in the learning process, assisted by the recent emphasis placed on the inquiry method and new designs for learning spaces. With the advent of new technological teaching devices, team teaching, large group/small group instructional modes, and independent learning strategies the school library media center has become, in many cases, an integral part of the teaching-learning process. During the late 1960's and early 1970's many new open space schools were built with the library media center in the middle or *heart* of the building. Therefore, the physical and curricular location of the media center has in reality reached the potential desired by early visionaries such as Johnson and Certain.[1]

The considerations necessary for creating a viable library media center encompass all aspects of the school's environment. The type of learning should dictate the environment that is to be designed. The environment should not dictate the learning, as is often the case. Hansen proposes a model flow chart as a systematic approach for designing a library media center.[2] This chart will be useful for planners of new or remodeled open space library media centers.[3]

Location of the Media Center

For years librarians and media specialists have advocated that the library and/or media center should be located in or near the center of academic activity in the school. Most open space schools have been designed around the media center, but many centers are suffering from "arterial sclerosis" in their major corridors. In many cases hallways have been eliminated, but students still need to move from one learning area to another. Many planners have ignored a very observable bit of human behavior--that

people will use the most direct route from one point to the next. To illustrate this point the following two figures are used. *Figure 1* is a middle school (grades 6-8) of over 1,000 students, in which some students are regrouped every fifteen minutes.* The lack of consideration for traffic patterns in this school creates a difficult and noisy situation in the media center four times each hour. *Figure 2* illustrates a very similar school where some students are regrouped every fifteen minutes, but within their own learning centers. Therefore, students only move around the perimeter of the library media center when they move to the cafeteria, physical education, music, and unified arts areas.**

The planner must strive to place the center so that distracting traffic patterns will be avoided, while at the same time providing maximum visibility, convenience, and user orientation. The center must be in the mainstream of activity within the school convenient to all academic units. If it is relegated to a peripheral location, much of its potential for serving the needs of students and teachers will be lost.

In an elementary school considerations for locating the library media center must include the following: 1) most elementary schools have small enrollments and are mainly composed of self-contained teaching areas which may be either traditional one-teacher groups or multi-teacher *family groups*; 2) there is little changing of classes from one area to another; 3) auxiliary spaces (i.e. offices, workrooms, production areas, exhibit space, conference rooms, and storage areas) must be logically arranged within the library media center; and 4) the design of the center should provide for easy supervision. *Figures 3 and 4* illustrate two types of open space elementary schools. *Figure 3* includes a walled-in core of teacher planning areas, media center workrooms, a media production area, and storage space. This core is surrounded by the open area for media materials, shelving, carrels, and study tables which are easily accessible to all of the learning centers of the school. Even though the media center is completely accessible to all students, it is very difficult to supervise, since nearly one-half of the media center is always out of range for visual supervision.

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*Drawings by Winslow Wedin.

**There are computer programs available which simulate traffic flow, thus enabling media center planners to visualize and anticipate the effect which space allocation and facilities placement will have on utilization of the Center. (See unpublished paper, "Open Media Center," by Raymond W. Barber, available from the author, Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pa.)

Even though one of the major premises of open space facilities is individualization and self-motivation, students are human beings and factors such as growth, nutrition, health, and home life affect their abilities to interact with learning activities during the entire day. This means that there is still a need for external discipline from teachers and other school personnel. *Figure 4* shows an open space elementary school media center with support areas like *Figure 3*, but they are located on the periphery of the center so that all areas may be easily supervised.

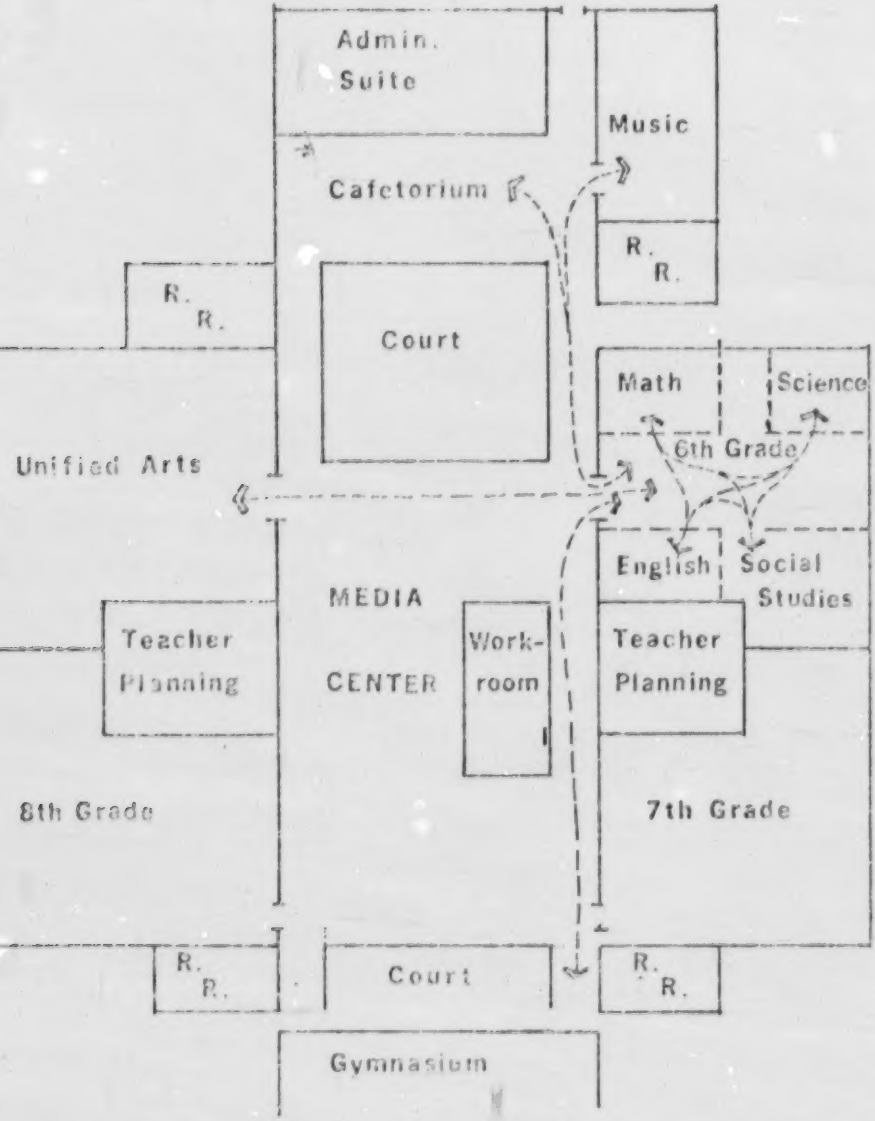
The location of the library media center in a remodeled facility can be easily facilitated if schools are willing to use the following principles for planning: (1) students from grades three through five or six will use the media center daily; therefore if possible, these teaching areas should be in close proximity to the media center, (2) whenever possible, all non-load-bearing walls should be removed, in order not to hinder access to the center by students and teachers; (3) any remodeled facility must be carpeted for acoustical control; and (4) all facilities and equipment of the center should be as portable as possible.

The following description illustrates the results of remodeling an elementary building for 650 pupils which is over twenty years old. *Figure 5a* is a diagrammatic sketch of the building, which is a typical 1950's single story building, with a series of classrooms in a row separated by a courtyard area. The courtyard is 80 feet wide by 140 feet long with five classrooms on a side. *Figure 5b* shows the addition made to the structure, utilizing the courtyard area. The media center portion of the addition is 60 feet wide by 80 feet long. Two classrooms are also a part of the addition, along with production and service facilities for the media center. Openings six feet in width were cut through the walls of each classroom for ease of access to the center. Therefore, twelve classrooms for grades three to six surround the media center out of a twenty-four room school building.

Physical Environment Within The Media Center

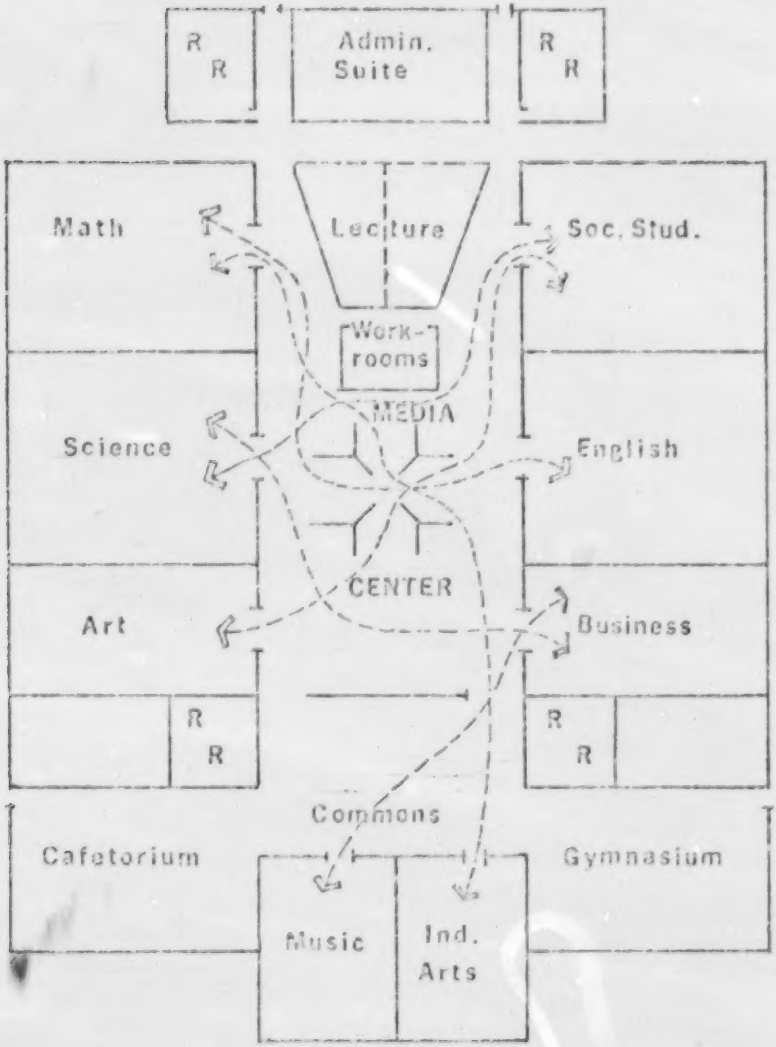
After the location of a media center has been determined, the next considerations involve supervisory control, acoustics, climate control, lighting, electrical design, water availability, and waste facilities. Workrooms, offices, and small group areas should have windows for easy observation of the center. These windows should

Figure 2



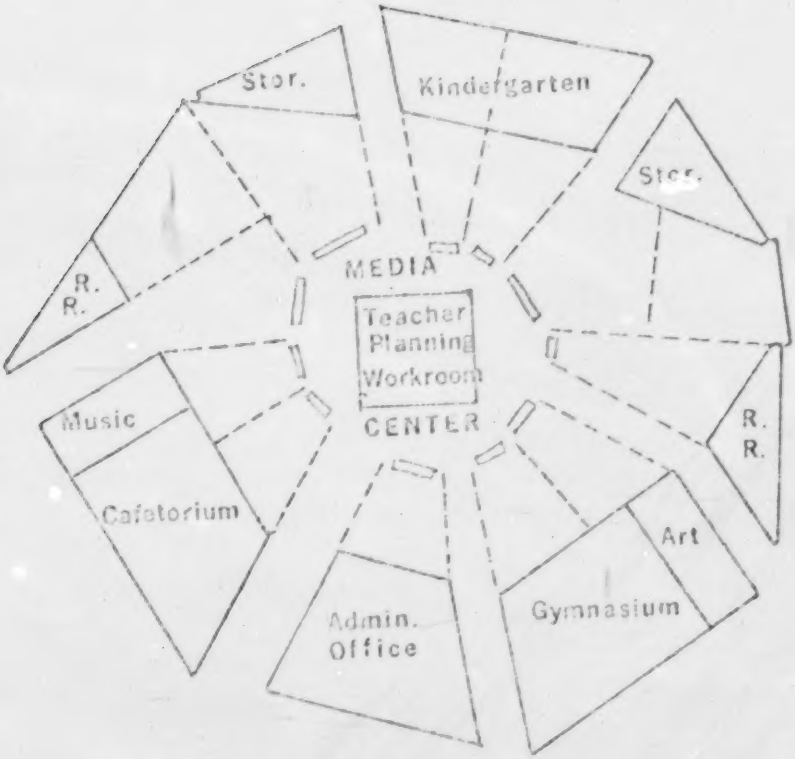
R.R. - Rest Rooms

Figure 1



R.R. = Rest Rooms

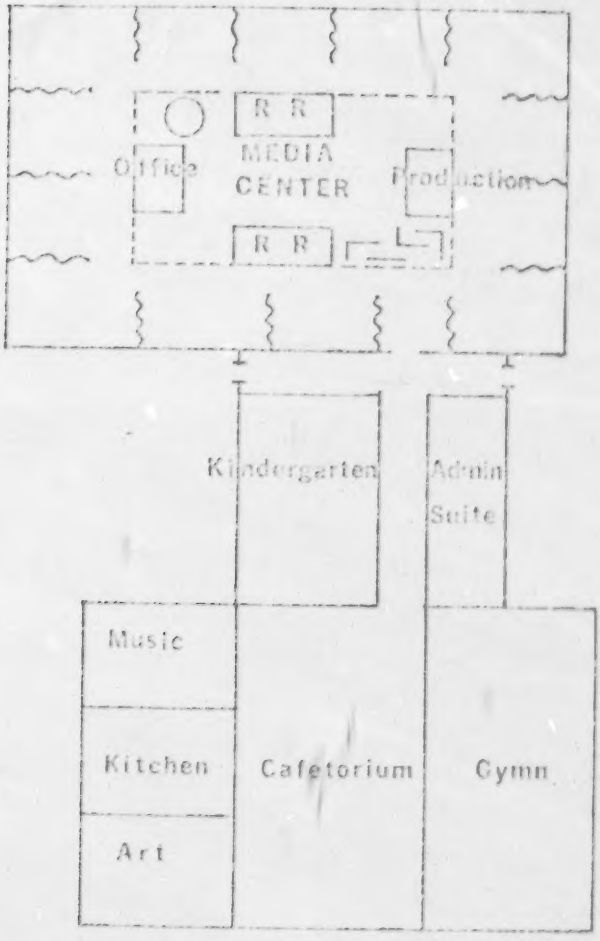
Figure 3



---- Portable visual partitions between class areas--not permanent walls

R.R. - Rest Room

Figure 4



~~~ Partitions for support areas (teacher planning areas, media center workrooms, media production areas, storage space).

R.R. - Rest Rooms
~~~

Figure 5b Original Building

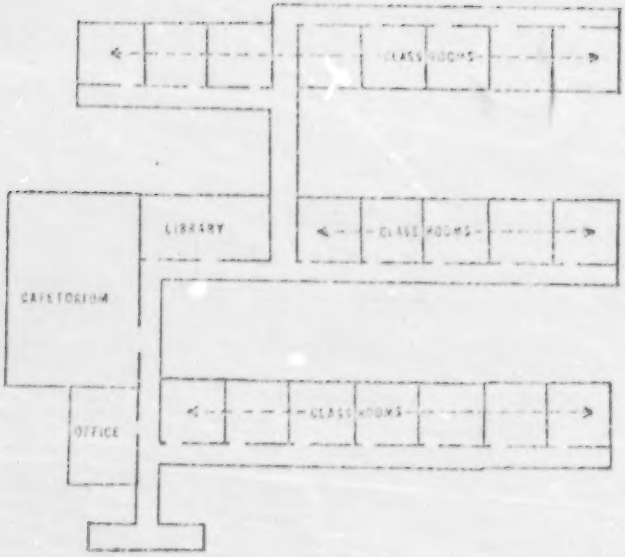
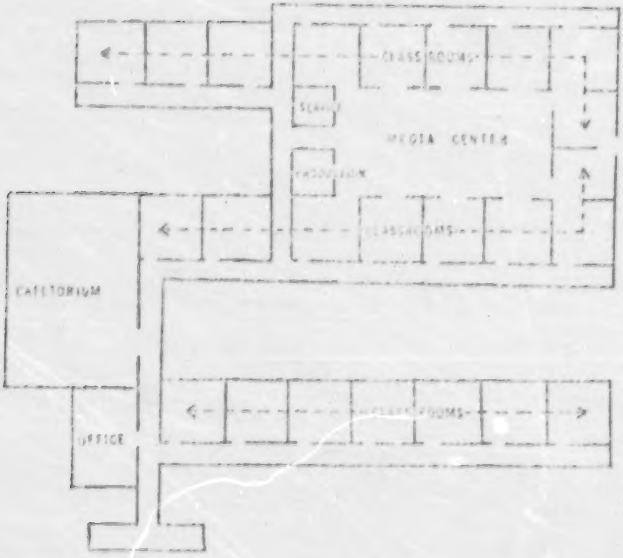


Figure 5a Building With Addition



be placed strategically so that, even when seated, the media specialist can quickly and easily observe these spaces. For areas such as workrooms, which when in use are unsightly, two-way glass windows can allow observation of the media center, but insure that the operations of the workroom are not visible to users in the reading areas. Another consideration for supervision is the placement of shelving. Tall shelves which could obstruct vision should be on the perimeter, with counter height shelving used to divide the center into logical learning areas while not interfering with supervision. Finally, when carrels are used they should not be so tall that an adult cannot see over them. Since students will be seated when using them, the side partitions need only to be high enough to provide individual privacy.

The acoustical control of media centers has been improved in recent years by utilizing carpeting and acoustical ceiling tile. But, when most walls are removed, further acoustical assistance can be provided by raising the ceiling of the media center in relation to other learning spaces which surround it and carpeting the exterior and interior walls of auxiliary spaces such as media offices, workrooms, production areas, television studios, and conference rooms. Further acoustical considerations involve the location of quiet and noisy areas. Use of the card catalog usually involves considerable activity, so it should be located away from quiet study areas of the center, but in close proximity to heavily used shelving areas. Current periodicals are in constant use so they should be located for easy supervision and away from quiet study areas. Those students who want to study current periodicals in a quiet atmosphere can take them to carrels or the quiet study areas. Considerable noise can be generated in heavily used production areas, so they should be located away from quiet zones of the media center.

An essential element of a quality media center is climate control. This may involve more than heating and cooling. Most new centers are air-conditioned but few if any have humidity control. As collections become larger and more microfilms, filths, filmstrips, and audio and video tapes are added, it is essential to have humidity control for preservation of these and other instructional materials.

Most lighting problems have been solved in recent years, but we must be constantly aware that architects may not fully understand

the special lighting needs of a media center. Recently a new center was designed with a built in index table in the foyer area. Although the lighting was quite adequate in most areas of the center, the architects left out the lighting panels over the index table. Therefore, several high intensity desk lamps are being used for a light source. Since many activities may take place within the media center simultaneously it is important that the lighting for various sections of the center be capable of independent control. Areas where films may be shown to groups should be equipped with rheostats so that light intensity may be changed gradually. One other consideration about lighting in a media center involves the lights in individual carrels. Most carrels have a shelf which makes a shadow on the reading surface, so lights are usually installed under the shelf. Make sure the lights you install are "student proof." If there is any way to dismantle these lighting components students will do so. They use the parts for their own electronic inventions. Care should be taken to prevent vandalism by selecting well designed and well built carrels.

Electrical design in open space media centers is one of the most neglected aspects of planning. Too many modern centers have been opened in recent years with all too few outlets in the main reading room or with many outlets covered by shelving. The latest in "electrical grids" should be explored for placement under the carpeting in the media center, even if this does not seem practical for other spaces in the school. No center should have electrical outlets spaced further than every ten feet throughout the center. This does not mean just around the perimeter of the room, but emphasis should be placed on having them placed evenly throughout all of the floor space. No one can determine where electricity will be needed. Where the floor construction makes electrical grids impractical the ceiling may be used and electrical lines dropped down where necessary. Outlets should be on several circuits so they will not become overloaded with many of them in use at one time.

Many new open space media centers are designed without consideration for availability of water which is essential in workrooms, production areas, and dark rooms. New designs do provide for water lines in the space between the roof and the acoustical tile ceiling, so water lines for other areas can be tapped and routed to the media center. But, waste facilities are still located in and under the cement floor and are nearly impossible to add after a building is built. It is imperative that drains be located in

every conceivable area to provide the future flexibility of an open concept school.

Furnishings

Since flexibility is the key to open space facilities, the furniture and equipment of a media center should be sturdy, lightweight, and portable. Many elementary centers are experimenting with cushions and hassocks to replace much of their table seating, but are retaining carrels for individual study. Old heavy wood furniture is being replaced by new flexible plastic and metal chairs and formica laminated tables. Care still needs to be taken to recognize height differential among students. Many tables and chairs are purchased without regard for their users. We need to have tables of adjustable height in elementary and junior or middle schools since there is so much variety in the height of students. All tables need some type of bracing for the legs because of constant shifting and the lack of coordination of students at this age.

Carrels need to be selected with care. In fact, they should be examined and tested for durability before purchase. Some elementary schools gain more flexibility by placing electrical outlets around the perimeter of tables and putting pre-cut boards in a criss-cross fashion on the top of the tables to create a private study area for four to six students. Most carrels should have electrical outlets, but other built-in features such as A-V equipment and elaborate rear-screen systems should be avoided. (There are only a few very special situations where built-in equipment is worth the sacrifice of flexibility. - *Editor*) All carrels should have marproof surfaces. Try to avoid white and other light colored carrel and table surfaces. While they are attractive they are difficult to maintain over the lifetime of the furniture.

It is important that school business officers realize the importance of standard shelving. All shelving should be in five-foot-long sections and of a desirable height for the age level of the students served. There should also be a durable backing on the shelves so materials will not slip through the back of the shelf. The width of the shelf is important where the center attempts to integrate all types of media on a similar topic together on the shelves. All shelving should be movable for flexibility; counter height shelving should be on wheels. Media on broad topical areas may then be shelved together and wheeled to the location of the school where and when students need the materials.

All informal seating in the center should have a durable, flexible, and washable covering. A cost savings on cheaper materials in the beginning will mean heavy repair and replacement costs later. Durability and color should always be considered along with comfort.

Some wall surfaces of the center should have a cork backing with a textured vinyl surface which hides pin and tack holes. There should also be glass cases for objects to be observed but not handled. The shelves and tops of counter height shelves in a center can also provide interesting and valuable space for sculpture and plants.

Display areas are important in the open school. Sir Alec Clegg indicates the central role played by displays.[3] They not only create an atmosphere for the center but also provide an opportunity for students to share learning experiences and improve self-concept.

Conclusion

Only good can come from a well designed media center that is part of a learning environment where teachers, students, media specialist, and materials interact to provide the spark which makes learning a joyful lifetime experience. Such centers make the goal of open education easier to attain. But just as the open school is a product of the humanizing movement in education, the human element must not be overlooked in the utilization of the media environment. Primarily the open media center provides an environment for the human task of education.

Notes

1 Norman Beatwick, "Two Certain Standards in Context: A Study of the American School Library Materials Center Concept," *Journal of Librarianship*, July 1970, p. 162.

2 Douglas E. Hansen, "A Systematic Approach to Learning Resource Center Design," *Educational Technology*, August 1972, p. 54.

3 Alec Clegg, *Revolution in the British Primary Schools* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1972).